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LIFE

OF THAT CELEBRATED ACTRESS,

MISS BLAND, OTHERWISE MRS. FORD, OR,

MRS. JORDAN;

Late Mistress of H.R.H. the D. of Clarence;

NOW

KING WILLIAM IV.,

FOUNDER OF THE FITZCLARENCE FAMILY:

DELINEATING

The Vicissitudes attendant on her Early Life;
The Splendour of her Noon-tide Blaze, as Mistress of the Royal Duke;
and her untimely Dissolution at St. Cloud, near Paris,—
resulting from a Broken Heart.

ACCOMPANIED BY NUMEROUS REMARKS AND ANECDOTES OF ILLUSTRIOUS AND FASHIONABLE CHARACTERS.

BY A CONFIDENTIAL FRIEND OF THE DEPARTED.

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THE

LIFE OF MRS. JORDAN.

There is no walk of literature so essentially calculated to instil salutary instruction, as that which results from the study of biographical sketches of public characters. The great mass of society propelled by one undeviating course, affords no materials of a prominent nature worthy the attention of a reflecting writer. It is the being schooled in active scenes of life, which displays materials calculated to awaken the energies of the mind: it is then we contemplate the changes and vicissitudes to which the march of human nature is subjected, and thence we are led to reason on causes and effects; in the progress of which research, we frequently discover that circumstances of the greatest moment owe their birth to events apparently inconsequential.

In sketching the present biography, it is our task to arouse feelings diametrically opposed to each other: we shall touch, as it were, the several chords of the human heart, and awaken every thrill—its vibrations alternately sounding to pleasure and to pain.

Miss Phillips, the mother of the heroine of our pages, was one of three sisters, and the offspring of a Welsh dignitary of the church, possessed of a good living; independent of which, his circumstances were affluent, and his character as a divine, in every respect moral and unimpeachable.

At an early period of life, Miss Grace Phillips eloped with one Captain Bland, a gentleman whose parents bore a high rank in society, from fortune as well as family connections; while in his own person he displayed great accomplishments. She was united to the Captain in Ireland by the rites of the Catholic church, of which country he was a native—being both at the time under the age of twenty: after which, they lived together for several years, and during the period in question, she bore her husband nine children, of whom, Mrs. Jordan was born at Waterford in 1762 or 1764.

At the time when the elopement took place, Captain Bland was on duty with his regiment in Wales, and having incensed his parents with the step thus clandestinely taken, they refused him pecuniary supplies, when the youthful couple, in order to procure a subsistence, had recourse to the stage. In consequence of this step, Mrs. Jordan may be said to have inhaled the earliest breath of life among a Thespian corps, of which profession she was ultimately doomed to figure as the Comic Queen. The family of the Captain inheriting all the pride of Irish birth, on finding that he had embraced the theatrical calling, became more exasperated; and the breach was in consequence so widened, that for a length of time all correspondence ceased between himself and his relatives.—Doctor Bland, however, the Captain's father, still anxious to see his son in prosperity, at length had recourse to legal advice; when having never consented to the union, and taking advantage of the ceremony being performed during his minority, he commenced legal measures in order to invalidate the marriage, in which he ultimately succeeded, when the unfortunate wife was left with a numerous progeny to struggle against every difficulty. At the period to which we allude, Captain Bland had attained the rank of Colonel; when finding himself freed from the matrimonial bond—unmindful of the duties of a father, and the line of conduct honour should have prescribed—he wholly abandoned his former partner, and in a short time led to the hymeneal altar another lady, possessed of an ample revenue; allowing his former wife a very mediocre stipend for the maintenance of herself and the numerous progeny she had borne him. Fortune, however, cannot control happiness, and the wealth obtained by Colonel Bland proved no panacea to the stings of a goading conscience: his former serenity soon vanished, and he died after a short lapse of time the victim of his own heartless conduct.—As the fortune of the second Mrs. Bland had been settled upon herself prior to marriage, in the event of the Colonel's death, his children by the former union were left totally destitute; until actuated by sentiments of common humanity, his relatives afforded some relief to the offspring, but totally abandoned the wretched mother to her cruel fate.

It was at the trying period alluded to, that the humane heroine of our pages, then under sixteen years of age, with that noble spirit which uniformly actuated her conduct, determined on attempting the stage in order to procure the means of subsistence for herself and her suffering mother.

Having made application to Mr. Ryder, the manager of the Dublin Theatre, her first appearance was in the character of

Phœbe, in As You Like It—she having assumed the name of Francis, in order to avoid giving umbrage to the haughty relations of her deceased father. Little did Mrs. Jordan, at that time, imagine she was destined at a future period to fascinate the overflowing audiences of a London playhouse, when sustaining the part of Rosalind in the same beautiful drama—and that the song of the Cuckoo would never be heard without commanding a rapturous encore.

In this opening attempt, Miss Francis experienced very little encouragement, yet was not depressed, but pursued her studies with indefatigable industry—applying herself to the acquirement of the various accomplishments so requisite for those who tread the theatrical boards.

Not long after the above essay, she procured an engagement with Mr. Daly, of the Crow Street Theatre, Dublin, when her favour with the public rapidly increased, particularly in her performance of the character of Adelaide, in the "Count of Narbonne;" at which period, she is supposed to have just attained her sixteenth year.

Soon after the above engagement, the theatrical company being at Waterford, the fascinating manners of Miss Francis arrested the attention of Lieut. Charles Doyne, of the third regiment of heavy horse (greens), then quartered in that city, who became seriously and honourably attached to her. This aspirant to our heroine's affections, though not possessing personal attractions, was a gentleman in manners and education, and in every sense of the word an honest man. Whatsoever might be the feelings of the daughter on this occasion, the mother was averse to the union; as in the event of her changing her name, the family would be deprived of their only means of support: in addition to which, Lieutenant Doyne having but a very circumscribed income, coupled with his pay, such slender resources were very inadequate to meet the wants of a growing family. The latter obstacle, therefore, proved insurmountable, added to which, Mrs. Bland, probably anticipating the future celebrity of her child, so powerfully worked upon her feelings, that the Lieutenant's offer was ultimately rejected.

Subsequent to this occurrence, an event took place that entailed infinite affliction on our youthful aspirant for fame. The manners and person of our heroine having attracted Mr. Daly's attention, he followed the *glorious* precedent of many individuals holding similar managerial stations: conceiving himself entitled to *command* the favours of every lady in his service, under pain of displeasure. Poor Miss Francis proved too virtuous

to submit, and for a period the unprincipled desires of her employer received a salutary check from the stern dictates of innate virtue. Finding himself foiled, the unprincipled manager caused his victim to be seduced to the residence of a dependent, where she was forcibly detained, and every unfair advantage taken of her helpless condition; wherefore, as soon as released, accompanied by her mother, brother, and sister, she clandestinely left Dublin, and arrived in safety at the town of Leeds, in Yorkshire; which event occurred in the month of July, 1782.

The first step taken by our actress was to apply to Mr. Tate Wilkinson, then manager of the York Company; who on meeting her and her family at the inn, found them in a very miserable plight. The parent of our actress, however, talked so highly of her daughter's merits, as nearly to disgust Mr. Wilkinson, who was, therefore, on the point of giving a flat denial to our aspirant. In this state of mind he quitted the family, but returned to the inn, being forcibly struck by the dejected and melancholy appearance of Miss Francis, which strongly pleaded in her behalf with the kind-hearted Mr. Wilkinson, who then requested her to give him a specimen of her talent, when she repeated a speech from the part of Calista, in Rowe's Fair Penitent, whereby he acquired some idea of her abilities; and it was in consequence determined, that on the Thursday following, being the 11th of July, she should make her opening essay under the name of Miss Francis. Her success, which was particularly due to the plaintive sweetness of her voice, proved complete; and on the termination of the tragedy, what Mr. Wilkinson feared would have proved detrimental to her interest, tended still more to ingratiate her with the audience; for no sooner had she closed the tragedy by her supposed death, when putting on a frock and mob cap, she ran upon the stage and warbled the *Greenwood Laddie* with such an effect, as completely fascinated the auditors.—The result of this essay was an engagement at a salary of fifteen shillings per week, one guinea being the highest sum given to any performer of that Thespian band.

From Leeds the company proceeded to York, in order to perform during the race week; where our heroine again personated *Calista* to the *Lothario* of Mr. Knight, who then made his debut, but was not well received in that character.

On the fifth of August our heroine took her benefit at Leeds, when she again selected the part of *Calista*; but preparatory to the performance, it was requested by the mother of our actress that her daughter's name, which had of course been announced as Miss Francis, might be altered to that of Jordan. Mr.

Wilkinson being desirous to ascertain the cause of this change of appellation, waited upon Mrs. Bland; when he was given to understand, that her daughter's aunt, a Miss Phillips, was then at York upon her death bed—and the lady in question greatly priding herself on family honours, and having figured on the stage, in which line she deemed herself pre-eminent, it was thought most prudent, under all circumstances, to pursue this line of conduct. The lady in question having had an interview with Mrs. Bland and her niece, expired the following week, after having pronounced Dorothy an honour to the blood of the Ap-Phillips's.

During the race week at York, our heroine performed *Rutland* and the *Romp*, &c.; upon which occasion *Gentleman* Smith, as he was denominated, being present, felt so much pleased with our actress, as to repeat his visits every night Mrs. Jordan trod the boards. On this occasion, the latter gentleman assured Mr. Wilkinson, he was singularly struck with our actress's talents, which made the manager secretly rejoice in having executed articles with her; and in the course of the race week she had an extraordinary benefit on account of her services, which Mr. Wilkinson found truly beneficial to his interest.

Speaking of our heroine's success at York, Mr. Wilkinson, in his work entitled "The Wandering Patentee," remarks :—"She (Mrs. Jordan) was much admired in *Arionelli*. A Mr. Tyler had performed that character, and with a degree of deserved credit—but Mrs. Jordan was not only new, but an object to the public and to me, as she greatly helped my coffers."

From York, early in September, she proceeded with the company of theatricals to Wakefield, then to Doncaster, and subsequently Sheffield, where her benefit though well patronised did not prove very productive. While at the latter town, our actress played the part of a chamber-maid in the opera of the "Fair American," on the 28th of October, 1782; in the personification of which character, she displayed infinite talent. In the last mentioned piece, during a scene that occurred, she and Mr. Knight, who personated a footman being on the stage, a certain scene and roller of an immense weight gave way, and was precipitated from the top of the theatre close at the feet of the performers, which, had it fallen on the head of either must have caused immediate death. While at Sheffield, his Grace the late Duke of Norfolk predicted the future fame of our heroine, that nobleman having from the period alluded to uniformly continued the friend of the subject of our memoirs.

The next remove of Mr. Wilkinson's theatricals, was to Hull,

where on Thursday, December 26th, Mrs. Jordan performed Calista, and sang the Greenwood Laddie, which was hissed, although executed with her accustomed sweetness. The fact is, a party had been raised against her, and it was some time ere the prejudices, under which she laboured from the tongue of malevolence, were subdued.

It is here necessary to state that when Mrs. Jordan's engagement with Mr. Tate Wilkinson had continued for a period, she was doomed to experience the effects of persecution, from one who, of all others, should have pursued a different line of conduct. Sometime previous to her seduction by Mr. Daly the Dublin manager, the mother of our heroine having been attacked by a dangerous fit of illness, physical aid was resorted to, when the feeling daughter having exhausted all the pecuniary means her slender salary afforded, had been compelled under existing exigencies to procure a loan from the manager, who immediately complied, not actuated from feelings of commisseration for the afflicted mother and her child; but under the dastardly idea of thereby placing within his power the object of his base desires. Having thus become a debtor from the most noble of impulses: the salvation of a parent's life, efforts were set on foot by the manager to intimidate our actress into a compliance with his wishes, by legally proceeding to enforce payment, and we believe the issue of a writ, for the arrest of her person, actually took place; which reminds us of the fiend-like Colonel Ket, recorded in English history, who offered to spare the life of a brother in case the sister yielded to his infamous wishes. Having refused to act according to his, Mr. Daly's will, the lady disdaining to make her chastity the price of such demoniac forbearance, braved the horrors of a gaol to maintain her character unsullied; when the manager was instigated to adopt the treacherous mode previously described, and ultimately triumphed over his devoted victim.

Mr. Daly having at length ascertained the residence of our heroine, who by her precipitate flight from Dublin had broken the engagement entered into with the manager, determined to pursue his victim for damages as well as the sum lent during her parent's illness, and proceedings had actually commenced.

Notwithstanding the change of name, Mr. Daly at length discovered the retreat of his victim; who, on account of her talents, had had her salary doubled; his resentment, therefore, increased; wherefore, as she had forfeited her articles in consequence of the precipitate flight from Dublin, added to which, the sum advanced during her mother's illness, still remained out.

standing against her, as previously observed, she was a second time threatened with arrest unless an immediate return to the Irish capital for the completion of her engagement took place. Thus cruelly circumstanced, a Mr. Swan, having investigated the whole case and taking pity on her forlorn situation, humanely paid down two hundred and fifty pounds, the sum stipulated in case she forfeited her articles, together with the amount of the small debt incurred. By this means, Mrs. Jordan was released from the dread of incarceration, having ever after found a sincere and disinterested friend in the gentleman whose name stands thus honourably recorded.

We shall now with pleasure dismiss from our pages the name of such a fiend as Mr. Daly, having only to add that when our heroine subsequently acquired that notoriety and fame in London, which her brilliant talents commanded, the Dublin manager in more instances than one, visited the metropolis of England, and used every endeavour to procure an interview with the lady whose annals we record, and obtain a sight of the offspring she had borne him; but in vain, her stern resolve proved inexorable, for as she had sworn so she acted, neither suffering her sight to be blasted by the betrayer of her honour or yielding the fruit of her disgrace to the arms of an inhuman and profligate parent. Such is the unvarnished tale respecting the first dereliction from the path of rectitude, of which Mrs. Jordan was guilty; if so harsh a term can be attachable to the act under all its bearings, as for ourselves, casting aside all prejudice of a favourable nature as the biographer of the lady in question, we must conscientiously declare that under similar circumstances, a daughter would not appear contaminated in our eyes; we should execrate her despoiler, commisserate her sufferings, and shed tears for her disgrace—but never brand her with an opprobius epithet or attach a thought of culpability to her name.

In reference to the Dublin manager, above adverted to, we give the following appropriate extract from a late writer:

"Our heroine (Mrs. Jordan) encouraged by maternal example, of course, looked to the stage as her future profession; and, about the year 1778, made her first appearance at Ryder's theatre, in Dublin, in the unimportant part of Phœbe, in 'As You Like It.' From prudential motives, and fearful of offending her father's family, to whom she still looked with hope,—for the child thinks not her father a villain, though all the world beside know him to be one;—she played under the name of Francis, and ran the round of maudlin young ladies, and third-rate sentimentalists, until she attracted the notice of Mr. Daly, a weak-minded villain, an unjust manager, and an unprincipled libertine.

" It was the practice of this hollow sensualist, to advance money to those ladies he had a design upon, and then second his attempts, not only with brutal violence, but a threat of arrest for debt. These amiable peculiarities he displayed towards our heroine; and to relieve the exigences of her family, she borrowed of the brute a small sum. She was daily rising in estimation in Dublin, and her juvenile tragedy was particularly admired. Mr. Daly made a proposition to her, which our heroine repelled with disgust, and we can readily conceive how hateful must that reptile have appeared, who made her distresses the plea for his insolence, and tempted her with gold on the one hand, whilst he threatened her with a prison on the other. Certainly, we of the irritable genus must be particularly irritable on this score; for even now, when that weak villain's bones have returned to the corruption that best befitted them, we could find it in our hearts to call them from the grave, to be burnt as a sacrifice to offended decency; and in saying this, we arrogate no peculiar virtue to ourselves; we do not mean to condemn, in one sweeping clause, the race called *(falsely* called) men of pleasure; but let them fight their battles fairly, at all events, and not win by meanness, that which should be gained by favour."

Mr. Boaden in his illustrations to the life of Mrs. Jordan, vol. 1, p. 360, after quoting as above, from Oxberry's memoirs, with great justice, adds as follows:

"We might have alluded to the actual perpetration of violence the most *brutal*, in one *particular instance*, the scene of which (like the Field of the Forty Footsteps), is still pointed out with strong *shudders* near Limerick; as having sullied a spirit every way amiable, and fixed its fate in life, far, far indeed, below the level of either its GENIUS or its VIRTUES.

"It will here be asked, why were not the violated laws appealed to, and the ruffian gibbetted for his atrocity? The answer must be, that the Irish gentleman of 1782 considered himself beyond their reach. His victim was young and poor, and embarrassed with the parents, who should have protected *her*. Who would have believed in the virtuous resistance of an actress? I will proceed no further."

"In 1783, we find our heroine returned to York; she was the great supporter of the opera of Rosina, particularly in the celebrated air, "*Let honour with desert be crowned.*" From York, she proceeded, as during the preceding year, to Leeds, Wakefield, Doncaster, and Hull.

It was at this period, Mrs. Jordan experienced the effect of intrinsic merit; she was scandalised by her rivals, and frequently

annoyed during her nightly performances, by the enemies who occupied the wings and stage doors of the theatre, where, by persevering malignity they laboured to destroy her. She was, however, fortunate enough in having such a manager as Mr. Tate Wilkinson, where love of justice was stretched beyond personal interest, and he therefore struggled to secure for our actress fair play. She was sometimes indolent, and at others refractory, capricious, and imprudent.

The permanent and unrivalled distinction of our heroine was not then her only characteristic. The *Romp*, it is true, was purposely curtailed for her in Ireland, and *Priscilla Tomboy* she had frequently personated with infinite effect; notwithstanding which however, she inclined to tragedy and parts in sentimental comedy. The *Country Girl* had not as then attracted her notice, until she witnessed its performance by Mrs. Brown, of the same company, after which she studied it with great attention, and thus became aware of the various opportunities it presented for the display of the wildness, laughing vivacity, rich and abundant humour, that ultimately combined to make it her own, far beyond all competition. It was owing to those circumstances that when the object of our memoirs began to be firmly established in the metropolis; she reminded of Mrs. Brown, as having made known to her the secrets of the character, as the rival manager conceived it worth while to try whether the reputed mistress could not outrival the pupil. There was, however, no ground to detract from the merits of Mrs. Jordan, and the charms of youth secured her from a rival's vivacity, which was rather ungenerously obtruded in a lady, who had passed the season of life in which the hoyden can alone look natural and prove attractive.

During the Spring of 1784, when the *Poor Soldier* was got up at Sheffield, our actress was principally instrumental in supporting the piece, which proved very lucrative for her employer, both in that and the other towns of Yorkshire.

She had now attained considerable celebrity at York as a settled performer; but when subsequently engaged for the London boards, she no doubt trembled for her success, and little dreamed of equipage and splendour. Among the characters in which our actress particularly figured, were *Emmeline*, *Lady Racket*, *Lady Bell*, *Lady Teazle*, *Lady Alton*, *Indiana*, *&c.*

It was towards the close of the above year that the feelings of Mrs. Jordan were sensibly awakened by the calls of a young lady about fifteen years of age, who made application to Mr. Tate Wilkinson for an engagement. She, as had previously been our actress, was accompanied by her necessitous parents, who solely

depended on her efforts for assistance. The young lady alluded to possessed a lovely figure and beautiful face, in short, every captivating attraction, which must be allowed by all such as remember her fascinations, when I state, that she ultimately became the universally admired Mrs. Mountain of Covent Garden theatre. Mr. Wilkinson's company being then complete, however, unwillingly was compelled to decline the engagement, but made her the offer of a benefit; when she acted in the *Maid of the Mill*, and afterwards delivered with considerable ability, George Alexander Stephens' Lecture on Heads. So great was the satisfaction given, that Mr. Inchbald, son-in-law of the celebrated female dramatist of the same name, made her an offer to personate *Rosetta*, in *Love in a Village*, on his benefit night, which took place Dec. 3rd, 1784. The effect produced on that occasion was decisive with the manager, by whom she was immediately engaged, from which period her fame progressively increased. She subsequently appeared as *Clarissa*, when *Lionel* was personified by Mrs. Jordan, who volunteered her services with all that commisserative feeling which was the inherent characteristic of her heart. In short, she beheld a sister of the mimic band, struggling to support her indigent parents, a sentiment in itself sufficient to awaken every genuine impulse of her soul—an appeal, in short, that was in her estimation irresistible!

Early in the year 1785, Mrs. Jordan witnessed the acting of the celebrated Mrs. Yates, in her favourite character of *Margaret of Anjou*, in the *Earl of Warwick*, being her last appearance but one upon the boards; after which the final display of her talents was for the benefit of poor Mrs. Bellamy, another rival of no less a personage than Mrs. Cibber. In the farce Mrs. Jordan personated *Fatima*, in *Cymon;* when Mr. Richard Yates being present, notwithstanding his acknowledged taste and judgment as to everything connected with the stage, pronounced that our actress was '*a mere piece of theatrical mediocrity.*' This perhaps originated in a want of exertion on her part, as she was then far from gaining celebrity in her profession, being careless and inattentive, and often either in reality or fictitiously seized with indisposition, an instance of which occurred on the 15th of March, when she appeared for the benefit of Mrs. Mills, being announced to sing an air at the termination of the third act of *Cymbeline*, and perform in the afterpiece of the *Poor Soldier;* but she alleged indisposition, and no persuasions could urge her to warble the song in question.

Having mentioned *Cymbeline*, we cannot refrain from remarking that Mrs. Jordan had frequently to personate the character

of *Imogen*, a part however completely out of her element, particularly in the scene where *Iachimo* attempts her honour, in which she proved deficient in delineating the conflicting sentiments of wonder, indignation, grief, reconcilement, and virtuous dignity.

On the 2nd of April, Mrs. Jordan, for the first time, witnessed Mrs. Brooks' performance of the *Country Girl*, a comedy then obsolete, and which had completely escaped her attention. This part, subsequently the most celebrated effort of our actress, so forcibly struck her that she determined on studying the author in order to sustain it the ensuing winter in London : indeed it seems almost certain that the witnessing Mrs. Brown's performance of *Peggy*, and other girlish characters, was the fortunate moment that prompted her to attempt the personification of the same.

Nothing of any material consequence occurred to our actress previous to her departure for the metropolis, except her becoming so careless, that her fame obviously decreased during the summer of this year, and on Monday, the 25th of July, when she took her benefit, and performed *Imogen* in the play, and *Rachel*, in the afterpiece of the *Fair American*, the house was very thinly attended : this circumstance we notice, as, the following year, Fate so awarded, that London audiences should bow obedient to her nod.

We have, on a former occasion, remarked that Gentleman Smith, of the Drury Lane company, had been particularly struck with the talents of Mrs. Jordan, when attending the performances, during a race week at York. This impression proved lasting in his mind, and a favourable opportunity presenting itself, he spoke of her talents in such exalted terms to the managers of Drury Lane theatre, that an engagement was proposed and agreed to, at a salary of four pounds weekly; our actress having to perform second-rate characters to Mrs. Siddons, in the walk of tragedy.

It is singular to observe that those very persons in the country, who began to slacken in the estimation of the powers of Mrs. Jordan, prior to her departure for the metropolis, on her re-visiting the north, after the applause she acquired at Drury Lane, literally crammed the provincial theatres to suffocation. The fact is, no change had taken place in our actress as regarded abilities ; but her circumstances were widely different, and thence originated this vacillation in public sentiment.

Previous to her journey to the metropolis, a variety of comments were hazarded, among which, one of her opponents, in the assumption of male characters, remarked to the manager,

that: "When he had lost his *great treasure* (a term uniformly applied to Mrs. Jordan) it would soon be thrown back upon his hands, and *it* would be glad to come if he would accept *it!*" This sarcasm was answered by the mother of our actress, who being seated at the stage-door while Mrs. Robinson was on the stage, addressing the manager, begged as an act of kindness, that he would inform her when that *fright* had done speaking and acting, for *it* was so horrid she could not look at *it*. The fright alluded to, however, was a remarkably handsome woman, of refined manners, good delivery, and so uniformly tasty and neat in her dress, that it was a general observation, that the Graces attended the toilet of Mrs. Robinson.

In the month of August, 1785, when Mrs. Siddons witnessed the performance of our actress at York, her remark was: "*She had better remain there than venture on the London boards!*" Little did the tragedian conjecture how soon they would jostle each other in their carriages at the stage-door of a London playhouse.

The last performance of Mrs. Jordan, prior to her essay in the capital, was on the 9th of September, 1785, when she sustained her part in the *Poor Soldier*, at Wakefield; after which she took her leave of Mr. Wilkinson, in whose company she had exerted herself for three years. The reputation of Mrs. Siddons had attained such a pitch of celebrity, that on the arrival of Mrs. Jordan in London, she entertained little hope of ever becoming her rival, and therefore resolved that her debut should be in comedy.

On the 18th of October, 1785, Mrs. Jordan made her first essay before a London audience; when she personated *Peggy* in the *Country Girl:* no favourable reports had been disseminated respecting her, and the house was by no means crowded; but the heart she displayed, and the witchery of nature, were so completely manifested, that the company were rapturous in their applause, and the unanimous opinion was, that no actress ever displayed greater power in drawing from her auditors incessant peals of laughter.

Notwithstanding this favourable reception, opinions differed in regard to the talents of our actress: one critic judged her rather vulgar, another conceived she could personate *Filch*, in the *Beggar's Opera*, with *eclat;* but denied her being gifted with sterling comic powers. She however pursued her course, and at the close of the first season commanded such a train of fashionables on her nights, as had never been known to assemble, except when Mrs. Siddons trod the boards.

Peggy was unquestionably the *chef d'œuvre* of Mrs. Jordan's comic powers, and we despair of ever again witnessing the sterling naiveté with which she sustained that arduous personification throughout; every scene possessed its characteristic excellencies; but in that where she pens the letter in presence of, and after the exit of her guardian, the powers of comic delineation had attained the highest pitch of excellence; in short, the mimic art could extend the witchery of its influence no further. After the celebrity acquired in sustaining the part of *Peggy*, Mrs. Jordan's salary was augmented to twelve pounds a week, two benefits during the season, being also allowed her, while among various other valuable presents, she received a purse from the club at Brooks's enclosing three hundred pounds.

A short time subsequent to her debut in London, Mrs. Jordan varied the style of her attraction, and in supporting the character of *Viola*, in *Twelfth Night*, displayed her tenderness and grace, as well as the lovely symmetry of her figure in male costume. It would be superfluous to dwell upon a part which she stamped peculiarly her own. The charms of her enunciation in the above character found the happiest expressions of the mighty poet, and the harmony of her tone affected the hearts even of the most insensible of her auditors. It may with truth be said, that the wild mellifluence of our heroine, according to the remark of a modern writer, caught a grace beyond the reach of art, and never failed to fascinate all hearers; but when accompanied by the orchestra, it seemed as if her wings were clipped, her liberty fled, and we might almost say,—the sweet bird sang no more. In the air to *Constancy*, which she introduced in the fourth act of the *Belles Stratagem*, some years after, namely on the 22nd of December, 1807, she gave the musicians such a specimen of "*unjoyous constancy*" as kept them all alive. Those singers who religiously adhere to Swift's Canon, should be left to themselves.

In the month of January, 1786, our heroine appeared as the *Hoyden*, in the *Trip to Scarborough*, a piece altered from Sir John Vanbrugh's comedy of the *Relapse;* when she gave additional proofs of her inimitable talent, in representing the complete Tom-boy. The magic effect of her laugh was never displayed to greater advantage, while the sparkling hilarity of her countenance completely fascinated an overflowing audience.

It was in the progress of the present season that the Covent Garden manager, aware of the success attendant on Mrs. Jordan's performance of the above cast of characters, made application to Mrs. Brown, the lady who had originally given our heroine the idea of personating that character at York. The latter in con

sequence essayed to become her rival, but the attempt proved a complete failure, and in consequence the reputation of our heroine was so permanently established as to defy the attempts of any aspirant in that walk of the drama. Shortly after this decided victory, Mrs. Jordan undertook the personification of *Hipollita*, in the comedy of *She Would and She Would Not*, which only tended to enhance her in the estimation of the public, and it may with truth be affirmed that when Drury Lane closed, no public character ever enjoyed in a more ample manner, the smiles and sincere good wishes of every lover of the legitimate drama.

In the year 1786, our heroine having resolved upon a professional excursion to Edinburgh, set out accordingly; and in her progress to the north, arrived at Leeds just at the period when her former opponent, Mrs. Robinson, was to take her benefit in that town. We have before adverted to this lady's prognostic to Mr. Tate Wilkinson in regard to his "GREAT TREASURE! *who would be glad to return, if he* (the manager) *would accept* IT." This actress had since inspected the London papers, and to her mortification heard of her *raised* salary, *two* benefits, *brilliant* presents, &c.: when her pride was doomed to experience a greater shock at her benefit, announced for the 16th of June, when she had selected *Horatia*, in the *Roman Father*, and *Widow Brady* in the Farce, such having been the character selected by our actress on her benefit night in London. It was on the very morning of the above day, that Mrs. Jordan, accompanied by her mother and her sister, entered Leeds, who after dinner made their appearance in an upper box of the theatre.—Our heroine was soon recognised by the audience, for if she had endeavoured to conceal herself, she failed of success. In the course of the farce she went behind the scenes, and with her accustomed sweetness of temper, renewed acquaintance with her former associate.

Mrs. Jordan during her stay at the above place, was solicited by the manager to play one night, which she agreed to, stipulating that they were to share the receipts after deducting fifteen pounds. He acquiesced reluctantly, under an impression that no profit would result to him; remembering, that the people of Leeds had, for three seasons previous to Mrs. Jordan's departure for the metropolis, very much neglected her performances. In this suggestion, however, he found himself agreeably mistaken—the plaudits of a London audience had entirely changed the scene, and the eagerness evinced to see the once-neglected Thalia, was increased in a tenfold degree, the theatre being crowded to an overflow to witness her representation of the *Country Girl* and the *Romp*.

In her progress to the capital of Scotland, the same *eclat* accompanied her journey; and when she took her benefit at Edinburgh on the 6th of August, she delivered the following address to the audience, after having personated *Letitia Hardy*, in Mrs. Cowley's *Belle's Stratagem*, in a manner that excited applause bordering upon enthusiasm.

ADDRESS:

Delivered by Mrs. Jordan to the Audience of Edinburgh.

"Presumption 'tis in learning's seat,
For me the Muses to entreat;
Yet, bold as the attempt may be,
I'll mount the steed of poesy;
And as my *Pegasus* is small,
If stumbling, I've not *far* to fall.

Hear then, ye Nine! the boon I ask,
While (throwing off the comic mask)
With gratitude I now confess,
How much you've heighten'd my success.

By stealing thus my sentence now,
You've heap'd your laurels on my brow;
Nor is the Northern sprig less green
Than that which in the South was seen,
For though your *sun* may colder be,
Your hearts I've found as warm for me.

One wreath I only gain'd before,
But your kind candour gives me more;
And, like your *union*, both combine,
To make the garland brighter shine.

'Tis true such planets sparkle here,
As made me tremble to appear;
A *twinkling star*, just come in sight,
Which, tow'rds the *Pole*, might give no light!

Melpomene had made such work,
Reigning despotic like the Turk,
I feared Thalia had no chance
Her laughing standard to advance;
But yet, her youngest ensign I
Took courage, was resolv'd to try,
And stand the hazard of the *die*.

Since then the vent'rous game I've tried,
With Nature only for my guide,
The *bets*, if fairly won, I'll take,
Nor wish to make it my *last* stake."

From the capital of Caledonia, Mrs. Jordan departed to display her fascinations at Glasgow, where her abilities entitled her to a

gold medal, bearing a very appropriate inscription, which was transmitted with the following laconic note :—

TO MRS. JORDAN.

"Madam,

Accept this trifle from the Glasgow audience, who are as great admirers of genius as the critics of Edinburgh."

The Medal represented on one side the armorial bearings of the city of Glasgow—A TREE; and on the reverse, A FEATHER, with the annexed happy inscription :

"*Bays* from our Tree you could not gather,
No *branch* of it deserves that name;
So take it all—call it a *feather*,
And place it in your cap of Fame."

On the return of our actress to London, she found that General Burgoyne, calculating on the success of his comedy, entitled *The Heiress*, had undertaken to adapt for the London Stage the popular French piece of *Sedaine*, entitled *Richard Cœur de Lion;* which, aided by the superlative compositions of Gretry, had created a complete theatrical mania in Paris. This charming production was seized with avidity by the theatres of Covent Garden and Drury Lane, but the genius of Burgoyne happily conceived that making *Matilda*, the monarch's wife, instead of *Blondel*, the discoverer of the place of *Richard's* incarceration, would enhance the scenic effect; that circumstances gave the complete preponderance to the representation at Drury Lane, on which occasion Mrs. Jordan sustained the part of *Matilda*, with an effect approximating upon magic. The success was complete —the piece commanded crowded benches, and the coffers of the playhouse well repaid the efforts of the translator, and all parties connected with that establishment.

In *Love for Love* our actress next acquired considerable fame, in sustaining the part of *Miss Prue*—a cast of character in every way adapted to her peculiar line of acting—which completely enchained the feelings of all frequenters and sound judges of theatrical perfection.

On the 15th of February, 1787, Thalia added fresh laurels to the blooming wreath she had acquired, by the performance of *Roxalana*, in *The Sultan*. Never shall we forget the fascinations of her manner while sustaining the part in question; which were of such a winning nature, that we have seen Barrymore, who personated the *Grand Turk*, unable to keep his countenance, when it was requisite for him to have looked the stern Bashaw. In one instance, on quitting the boards, he ran into the green-room, threw himself on a sofa, and after indulging in a laugh

that was nearly suffocating, turned to our heroine, exclaiming :— "By the Holy Prophet, madam, if you continue to play after this fashion, you will dispatch me in an agony of laughter, to the seventh heaven, there to enjoy my houris everlastingly."

In 1787, we find our actress most successfully figuring in the part of *Juletta*, in the piece of *The Pilgrim*, by Fletcher, which was calculated to afford every scope for the powers of the lady whose talents we commemorate.

At the commencement of the ensuing season of 1788, the lovers of sterling comedy were enchanted on witnessing the character of *Rosalind*, in Shakspeare's *As You Like It ;* no part having been sustained with more archness of manner—while in the Cuckoo song, the naiveté was beyond all praise.

For her benefit, which took place in May, Mrs. Jordan performed the part of *Sir Harry Wildair*, in the *Constant Couple*, in which Mrs. Woffington had acquired a celebrity that had been conceived unapproachable : the result proved the contrary, as the thorough conception of the character, manners, and essence of the writer, were so completely developed by our performer, that she bore away the palm of competitorship.

Unlike those filling the highest stations in the theatrical band, Mrs. Jordan never seceded from her duty, after enjoying the fruits of a benefit ; on the contrary, she remained uniformly at her post, continuing to act even in play and farce to the end of the term, a fact which occurred on the 13th of June in the above year, being the final night of her performance for that season.

We must now, for a short period, digress from the theatric annals of our heroine, to speak of the connection she formed with Mr. Ford, son of Sir Richard Ford, who then held the lucrative situation of chief sitting magistrate at Bow Street. Although every endeavour had been made to ascertain the precise time when their friendship commenced, we have not been able to succeed ; however, from circumstances connected with the offsprings which were the fruits of this intercourse, we rather imagine that she sought the protection of Mr. Ford, about the period of her life to which we now refer.

It appears most probable, that the pre-eminent talents of the lady, in the first instance, wrought upon the affections of Mr. Ford, who being intimate with most of the first-rate performers, easily obtained an introduction to the acquaintance of Mrs. Jordan, soon after which he made a formal declaration of his passion ; this we know was accompanied by *a solemn promise of marriage*, which the gentleman said must be deferred, under the dread of giving offence to his father, on whom he was dependant ;

when confiding in the honour and promises of her suitor, Mrs. Jordan at length consented to place herself under his protection.

With Mr. Ford she cohabited for many years *as his wife*, in full expectation that Sir Richard would become reconciled to the union at no very distant period, and the fruits of that connection were several children, who derived their entire support from the exertion of the mother, her fidelity to the gentleman she regarded as her husband, having never been called in question, as the uniform conduct she pursued was so exemplary as to render her even a pattern of matronly excellence for every married woman.

So invariably correct indeed was the conduct of the lady whose annals we record, that no suspicion was ever entertained respecting her not being legally the wife of Mr. Ford. Many instances illustrative of this fact might be adduced, but as one will speak for the rest, we beg to instance the names of Sir Francis Lumm, Bart., and his Lady, who resided in Argyle Street. They were in the habit of giving splendid routs, at which Mrs. Ford was constantly received as the wife of that gentleman, who uniformly attended such parties with his *protegee;* being by him introduced in the character of a married woman.

The Baronet and his lady, as before observed, kept a great deal of evening company, but their dinner parties proved extremely select, there being never more than four persons, independent of themselves, who sat down to table; of the latter, as constant attendants, were the late Captain B—yly, nearly allied to the present Ma—s of Ang———a, and his lady, with Captain Hill and his wife, a daughter of Lord Molesworth. The cloth being withdrawn on those occasions when Mrs. Ford was expected to join the evening party, the conversation generally turned to the subject of the advances made by her illustrious suitor, when Lady Lumm's uniform observation was: "I shall again this evening instil into her mind the absolute necessity of *sticking* to Mr. Ford, for I am well convinced no good will accrue from the princely association." This advice her ladyship never failed to inculcate—making our actress take her seat beside her at the card-table, when she would at intervals in a half whisper, repeat the counsel alluded to.

There was much play at the *Soirees* in question; but Mrs. Jordan never touched a card; and among the visitants, were the Miss Dalrymples, Lady C—ll—r, famed for pilfering card-money, &c.

On more occasions than one, the writer was present at the parties alluded to, when our heroine's affability of manners and sweetness of deportment were the general themes of admiration,

a sentiment still more enhanced, when she electrified the auditors by warbling one of her ballads wild,

> ———That flowed like softest music,
> O'er the placid surface of the deep.

The earliest introduction of the writer to a knowledge of Mrs. Jordan, was at the time she resided in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, at which period her biographer was a mere stripling. Nothing was then heard of but the crowded houses she uniformly brought, as our actress rarely appeared but to overflowing benches; indeed it seemed as if fortune delighted to scatter her path with flowers, and that it was next to impossible, adverse fate should ever embitter the days of Mrs. Jordan with its frowns.

So eager was the public desire to catch a glance of our Syren off the boards, that we have actually known persons take their stations near the stage-door to witness her stepping from the carriage or entering the same, on proceeding to, or returning from, rehearsals. In short, she then ranked unquestionably one of the most envied daughters of the mimic art that ever appeared to fascinate a London audience.

Independently of the characters before-mentioned, Mrs. Jordan, during the season of 1788, figured in a farce, called *The Panet*, cut down by Mr. Kemble from Bickerstaff's *'Tis Well it's no Worse.* She also played *Corinna*, in the *Confederacy;* while her *Nell*, in the *Devil to Pay*, which she personated after the character of Rosalind, needs only to be mentioned to excite to action the risible muscles.

It had long been the wish of Mr. Kemble that some piece written expressly for Mrs. Jordan should appear, and at length Mr. Cumberland produced a comedy called the *Impostor*, wherein she performed the prominent part, and during the first four acts the piece met with well merited applause, but the concluding act proving tedious, the comedy had but a short run.

During the summer of this year (1788), his late Majesty George III. accompanied by the Royal Family, visited Cheltenham, when in order that her attractions might not pall upon the lovers of the drama in London, by a too frequent repetition of her parts, our heroine determined on a professional excursion to the above watering-place, where she was welcomed with enthusiasm. During her continuance at this town, the nobility and gentry presented Mrs. Jordan with a very elegant gold medal, accompanied by a written document so truly gratifying to her feelings, as to confer tenfold value on the token by which it was accompanied.

It now appears that the brilliant success and increase of salary awarded to our heroine, excited great uneasiness in the Kemble

family. Mrs. Siddons in particular, the Melpomene of the day, whose idol was Crœsus, could not restrain her internal dissatisfaction, which became so intrusively disagreeable to the subject of this memoir, that overtures were made to her from the manager of Covent Garden and a *Carte Blanche* tendered, in order that she might stipulate her own terms. Alarmed at the idea of losing one of the main props of his house, Mr. Sheridan had an interview with Mrs. Jordan, who having stated her grievances respecting the Kemble coterie, he at once closed with our heroine at a salary of thirty pounds per week, then esteemed a very enormous stipend. In reference to the dissatisfaction of Mrs. Siddons, a caricature was issued, we believe from a design of Bunbury, representing the tragic queen with pockets overgorged with gold and bank paper; while hanging to the prong of a pitch-fork thrust up from the infernal regions, was a bag of gold, to obtain which the hungry Melpomene was stretching forth her hand in a fine tragedy attitude, accompanied by a look of greedy supplication.

If such was a leading trait in the conduct of Melpomene, Thalia was the very opposite: charity being the prominent characteristic of her mind. No deserving object ever applied for relief in vain, and even prior to her connection in a certain quarter, the following fact may be relied upon. Bearing in mind the cruel conduct exerted towards herself by Mr. Dayly, and the difficulties experienced during her pregnancy, she always entertained the most humane and lively feelings for destitute females similarly circumstanced. Actuated by that praise-worthy sentiment, Mrs. Jordan provided herself with several complete sets of linen necessary for lying-in women; which, upon application and a knowledge that the objects were deserving, she was accustomed to lend out for the use of females under such circumstances. Being better enabled to indulge her philanthropic disposition after joining an exalted personage, her charitable exertions increased for a time in proportion to her means, and numerous were the objects who showered blessings upon one whose benevolence was as unostentatious as it proved liberal and extended in its varied ramifications.

The winter of 1789 was spent by our heroine in personating, during the season, most of those characters in which she had so uniformly obtained the plaudits of her hearers. In the summer of the present year she made another trip to Edinburgh, where the same success crowned her endeavours until towards the close of her theatrical exertions, when the manager sought to cast an odium upon her for not completing her agreement, which she was prevented from doing on account of the death of her revered mother. No female ever felt more unbounded love for a parent

than did Mrs. Jordan, who experienced the most acute anguish for the loss she had sustained; it was indeed, an affliction so deeply rooted that it required every effort of reason and philosophy to counteract its poignant effects. Grief, perhaps, found some alleviation from the efforts of the poetic muse, as at the period alluded to we find that the accompanying lines were written by our actress, the same having found insertion in the Edinburgh Herald.

TO THE MEMORY OF A REVERED MOTHER.

"Be ready, reader, if thou hast a tear,
Nor blush if sympathy bestows it here;
For a lost mother hear a daughter moan—
Catch the last sounds, and learn like her to groan!
Yet e'en those groans (sad echo's all to mine)
Must prove faint offerings at so dear a shrine:
If feeble these, how feebler far must be
The tribute to be paid by poesy!
The bleeding heart that's whelm'd with real woe,
Affects no flow'rs near Helicon that grow;
Sobs and swoln sighs ill suit sweet number'd lays:
The tear that waters cypress, drowns the bays.
Hard then must be the task in mournful verse,
The praise of a lost parent to rehearse.
Mild suff'ring saint! exemplary through life,
A tender mother and a patient wife;
Whose firm fidelity no wrongs could shake,
While curbed resentment was forbid to speak.
Thus silent anguish marked her for her own,
And comfort coming late was barely known;
It, like a shadow, smil'd and slipp'd away—
For churlish Death refused to let it stay:
A two-fold dart he levell'd to destroy,
At once a mother's and a daughter's joy;
Better a double summons had been given,
To wipe our sorrows score, and make all ev'n,
By kindly calling both at once to Heaven."

It is not a little singular that while our heroine fulfilled this engagement at the Edinburgh theatre, her uncle, the elder brother of her father, Colonel Bland officiated as treasurer of that establishment. In the early part of his life, this gentleman had served in the army, but being at length reduced in circumstances, was under the necessity of having recourse to the theatrical profession in order to procure subsistence.

The first appearance of our actress at Drury Lane after her return to London from the north, was as late as the 8th of February, 1790, at which period Mr. Kemble gave a situation in the theatre to Mr. Bland, Mrs. Jordan's brother, who performed

Sebastian in *Twelfth Night*, to his sister's *Viola*. The gentleman in question bore a personal resemblance to our actress, and as his figure was diminutive, not even towering above that of his disguised relative, the mistaking one for the other was rendered more agreeable to the eye of the observer. In person, however, consisted the only resemblance between the male and female of this family, Mr. Bland never having displayed talents above mediocrity.

Mr. Kemble, on the 8th of March, brought forward Mrs. Behn's comedy of *The Rover*, under the title of *Love in many Masks;* it had not been peformed for thirty years, at which period it came out at Covent Garden theatre, the characters of *Whilmore*, *Blunt*, and *Helena*, having been sustained by Messrs. Smith and Shuter, and Mrs. Woffington, the latter lady being replaced by Mrs. Jordan. Although the title adopted by Mr. Kemble, on the revival of this piece, was by no means striking, he had nevertheless the powers of our actress to support the attempt, which she did to the universal satisfaction of her auditors.

On the benefit night of our heroine, the 22nd of the same month, after playing in *The Belle's Stratagem* with her accustomed excellence, she brought forward the farce of *The Spoiled Child*, when her *Little Pickle* was hailed with rapturous enthusiasm. This piece, ascribed to Mr. Ford, was frequently performed, and to those who recollect her execution of the ballad commencing "Since then I'm doom'd," it would be superfluous to panegyrise, as her personification of the mischievous hero of the piece far outstripped all attempts at praise.

We next find our actress inducted to the part formerly sustained by Mr. Clive, in Fielding's *Intriguing Chambermaid*, and on the 17th of November, Miles Peter Andrews in conjunction with Messrs. Reynolds and Topham, brought forward *Better Late than Never*, wherein Mrs. Jordan had to personate the heroine under a series of disguises. This piece possessed so little merit that notwithstanding the efforts of our actress, it speedily became a dead letter. Our heroine, for her benefit, revived *The Humorous Lieutenant* of Beaumont and Fletcher, under the title of *The Greek Slave*, or *School for Cowards*, a comedy in which she played *Celia*, the part formerly filled by Mrs. Woffington. After the play, our actress delivered an epilogue, written expressly for the occasion by Harry Bunbury; the opening lines, though applicable to the piece, seem as if in allusion to an event then, perhaps, on the tapis.

> "How strange! methinks I hear the critic say,
> What *she*, the serious heroine of a play!

The manager his want of sense evinces,
To pitch on *Hoydens* for the *love* of PRINCES!
To trick out *Chambermaids* in awkward pomp,—
Horrid! to make a Princess of a *Romp*.

At the close of the season, incessant attendance on her theatrical duties had so far impaired the health of Mrs. Jordan, that she became seriously indisposed, and a spitting of blood that took place, seemed indicatory of an approaching decline. As her medical adviser thought change of air essential, and being partial to the north of England, Mrs. Jordan determined to visit York, where she had not been for some years. Thither she repaired, accompanied by Mr. Ford, and performed during the race week in several of her first rate parts. A dislike, however, to the lukewarm conduct displayed by the York audience, led her to refuse the fulfilment of stipulations previously entered into, wherefore she chose to forfeit the sum named in case of failure, rather than play; and being then at Castle Howard for the benefit of the country air, she forwarded a letter, of which the annexed were the contents.

"SIR.—I agree with pleasure to your proposal of giving you thirty pounds rather than ever perform in York. I shall return to-morrow, and settle the balance of the account.

I am, Sir,
Your obliged humble Servt.—D. FORD."

After continuing her tour to Newcastle, and other towns of the north, Mrs. Jordan returned to the London boards, being however, compelled at intervals to absent herself, owing to the increase of her family by Mr. Ford. In this state of affairs she continued until the summer of 1791, when following her professional avocations at York, she was on many occasions subjected to gross insults while on the stage, from the interference of some rigid moralists, in consequence of her cohabiting with Mr. Ford in the character of his mistress; and it was then our actress for the first time began seriously to contemplate a separation, unless he consented to ratify his promise by making her his wife.

On resuming her engagement in London, immediately after the occurence above referred to, it was the adverse fate of the heroine of our tale, to arrest the attention of an exalted individual, who became particularly fascinated by her personification of *Little Pickle* in *The Spoiled Child*. The exquisite symmetry of Mrs. Jordan's form in male attire, and more particularly her unmatched talents in delineating the character of *Little Pickle*, combined to subdue the affections of the personage in question; and in consequence overtures were made, when the lady, with that delicacy

of feeling so invariably characteristic of her actions, rejected the offer, situated as she still was with Mr. Ford. Thus for a time matters continued; the lover's importunities increasing, while pecuniary offers were tendered in the way of a settlement to the amount of one thousand pounds per annum, which ultimately led our heroine to conceive that it became a bounden duty, on account of her offspring, to reflect seriously on the subject. The ultimatum of this painful scrutiny was a proposal on the part of Mrs. Jordan, that as she had for so many years cohabited with, and borne him (Mr. Ford) a family of children; in consideration also of her having been uniformly introduced into society as his wife, she conceived herself justly entitled to his hand; and in consequence stipulated that Mr. Ford should at once name a day to ratify the promise so incessantly made, or in the event of a refusal she conceived herself at liberty to act as the dictates of prudence should prescribe. Mr. Ford, however, thought fit to evade the question, when our heroine conceived herself at liberty to embrace the protection offered by the Duke of Clarence; as in that case, she conceived ample means would be placed at her disposal to provide for her offspring, in whose behalf no legal plea on Mr. Ford could be set forth.

This state of affairs was soon bruited abroad, when a party sprung up in vindication of Mr. Ford, by whom he was represented as an abandoned and injured man, to which were added aspersions on her conduct in a professional point of view. Mrs. Jordan, however, who, when roused, was as capable as any woman to vindicate her own wrongs, determined by a bold step to effect that end, and in consequence the following letter appeared in all the public prints, dated from the treasury of Drury Lane theatre, the 30th of November, 1790.

"SIR,—I have submitted in silence to the unprovoked and unmanly abuse which, for some time past, has been directed against me,—because it has related to subjects about which the public could not be interested; but to an attack upon my conduct in my profession, and the charge of want of respect and gratitude to the public, I think it my duty to reply.

Nothing can be more cruel and unfounded than the insinuation that I absented myself from the theatre, on Saturday last, from any other cause than real inability, from illness, to sustain my part in the entertainment.

I have ever been ready and proud to exert myself to the utmost of my strength, to fulfil my engagements with the theatre, and to manifest my respect for the audience; and no person can be more grateful for the indulgence and applause with which I have been

constantly honoured. I would not obtrude upon the public attention to anything that does not relate to my profession, in which *alone* I may, without presumption, say, I am accountable to them; but thus called on, in the present instance, there can be no impropriety in my answering those who have so ungenerously attacked me,—that if they could drive me from that profession, they would take from me the ONLY INCOME I have, or mean to possess, the whole earnings of which, upon the past, and one half for the future, I have settled upon my CHILDREN. Unjustly and cruelly traduced as I have been, upon this subject, I trust that this short declaration will not be deemed impertinent; and for the rest, I appeal with confidence to the justice and generosity of the public. I am, Sir,

Your Obedient Servant,—DOR. JORDAN."

A variety of ill-natured paragraphs appeared in the daily prints notwithstanding this unvarnished explanation of facts, until the 10th of December, when Mrs. Jordan performed the part of *Roxalana* in *The Sultan*, on which occasion the public displeasure was openly manifested, but conscious of the rectitude of her own sentiments, she advanced boldly to the front of the stage, and alluding only to circumstances connected with her theatrical calling, addressed the audience in the following terms.

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I should conceive myself utterly unworthy of your favour if the slightest mark of public disapprobation did not affect me very sensibly.

Since I have had the honour and the happiness to strive here to please you, it has been my constant endeavour by unremitting assiduity, to merit your approbation. I beg leave to assure you, upon my honour, that I have never absented myself one minute from the duties of my profession, but from real indisposition. Thus having invariably acted, I do consider myself under the public protection."

The separation of Mrs. Jordan from Mr. Ford was at length made public, when she immediately became the *protegee* of her royal admirer; it should, however, be explicitly understood that no improper intimacy took place between the parties anterior to the candid proposal made upon her part to Mr. Ford, as previously explained, and his non-acquiescence with the same. When the proposal of his Royal Highness became the theme of public discussion, Sir Francis and Lady Lumm, whose names we have previously had occasion to introduce, most strenuously advised Mrs. Jordan never to accede to the terms of his Royal Highness, as in such case, however painful to their feelings, they could no longer tolerate her as a visitor to their mansion.

Immediately after Mrs. Jordan's separation from Mr. Ford, the latter gentleman conceived it necessary, on many accounts, to quit the shores of England for a period until the publicity of the affair should have subsided. We have previously remarked that the individual in question had for a series of years introduced our actress into the best societies, in the character of his lawful wife, and it was no very improbable conjecture upon his part, that some fathers of families, or brothers, tenacious in regard to the characters of their wives, daughters, or sisters, might conceive themselves called upon to demand that explanation which Mr. Ford was not able to give in a satisfactory manner, and must have brought things to extremities. To this may be added the vacillating conduct of the gentleman, after the assurances so often and so solemnly reiterated, that he would give his *protegee* a legal claim to his affections; being thus placed in no very enviable point of view with men of honourable feeling,—for those reasons he determined on absenting himself from England.

It is singular that the writer, then a youth, accompanied by his father, was in the packet boat that conveyed Mr. Ford to France, and as far as we are enabled to call circumstances to our mind, the gentleman alluded to, whose only intercourse during the passage was with our parent,—seemed to enjoy no very enviable state of mind, a fact that in some measure redounds to his credit, as an apathetic sentiment under similar circumstances, must have stamped him altogether divested of the best feelings of humanity.

The opposition to our actress, which had previously manifested itself, became more formidable after her open cohabitation with the Duke of Clarence, several attempts being set on foot to drive her from the stage; but these ebullitions gradually subsided, and her talents and sweetness of disposition ultimately reinstated her completely in public favour.

Among the numerous anecdotes circulated in consequence of this splendid connection, we insert the following:—

The late illustrious parent of Thalia's new protector is reported to have said to his son, "Hey, hey;—what's this—what's this? you keep an actress, keep an actress, they say."—"Yes, sir."—"Ah, well, well; how much do you give her, eh?"—"One thousand a year, sir."—"A thousand! a thousand! too much, too much! five hundred quite enough—quite enough!" It is added that the son wrote to our actress, expressing the opinion of his parent, and as it was then customary at the bottom of the play bills, to annex these words: "*No money returned after the rising of the curtain!*" that our actress tore the same off, and enclosed it in a blank cover, to her protector.

The well-known parsimony and illiberal sentiments of the individual alluded to in the first of the above statements, tend to confer some appearance of validity as to this anecdote; the latter statement we have merely inserted in order to give it an unqualified denial, as any person possessing a tithe of our knowledge of Mrs. Jordan's delicacy of sentiment, would pronounce her wholly incapable of having made the indecent allusion referred to.

We have previously spoken of an annuity of one thousand pounds a year, said to have been settled on our actress by her new protector. Now when she ultimately became reduced in circumstances, we should like, in the first place, to enquire what had become of the large sums obtained during her long and brilliant theatrical career, placed in the funds, and intended after death, for the support of her offspring by Mr. Ford; and secondly, where were the proceeds and brilliant results expected to accrue from this princely boon?

We do not pretend to infer that such settlement did not take place,—that is to say, as far as the signing a legal instrument was concerned: but what avail sheets of parchment, with their seals annexed, and barren autographs?—the technicalities of the law can neither create gold, or stamp Bank paper! The only question, therefore, resolves itself to this:—*Was the annuity ever paid?* Prudent motives deter us from answering; but from what will be stated hereafter, we leave its solution to the cool judgment of every dispassionate reader.

A remarkable addition to the fortune of our actress, occurred in the year 1791, by the death of a near relative of her mother's, which, coupled with the emoluments derived from her professional avocations, swelled her income to three thousands pounds per annum.

This ample fortune, and the high patronage obtained by Thalia, would, of course, have empowered her to liquidate such pecuniary obligations as might have oppressed her, had any such existed, or in the event of a want of principle on her part (than which nothing was so foreign to her sentiments), the laws were open to have compelled her acquiescence with the calls of justice: yet no such means ever were resorted to. We make these observations for reasons that will become manifest in the progress of our recital.

Our actress was now the inmate of a mansion-house of potentates; carriages and servants attended her bidding, and she seemed to bask in the full splendour of fortune; while to crown her felicity, she proved in that situation which is uniformly gratifying to those who feel anxious to present a progeny to their protectors.

So unostentatious and truly domestic were the habits of Mrs. Jordan, after her new and exalted connection, that we have frequently witnessed her arrival, in a plain yellow chariot, at Miss Tuting's, a milliner in St. James's Street, when she would alight with an infant in her arms; and during her stay, frequently change the linen of the little one in the shop, while freely conversing with the person in attendance to wait upon customers.

Among the personages of note who took delight in the manners of Mrs. Jordan, were the great Burke, and more particularly, Sir Joshua Reynolds, who conceived her histrionic talents far superior to those of Mrs. Abington; and on one occasion, arguing with a friend upon this topic, who maintained that the latter performer had a more extended *range* of playing, Sir Joshua remarked, "I do not know that you can make out your point; for opposed to the fashionable ladies of Mrs. Abington, you have the fashionable *men* of Mrs. Jordan; and the women who would *pass* for men, whether *Wildairs* or *Hypolitas*, in comedy, and the tender and exquisite *Viola* of Shakspeare, where she combines *feeling* with sportive effect, and does as much by the music of her *melancholy*, as the music of her laugh."

In the year 1792, our actress found herself compelled to retire for a short period from professional duties, in consequence of a miscarriage at Petersham, being far advanced in her pregnancy, when she gave birth to a daughter. This event occurred early in August, and being recovered in the September following, she visited the Richmond Theatre, to witness Mrs. Litchfield, then a young actress, personate *Julia* in the *Surrender of Calais*. The powers of the lady in question, particularly pleased our actress, who was unbounded in her applause; indeed, so violent was her action, that she literally severed the links of a gold chain, whereto was appended the miniature of a *Royal Personage*, which dropped upon the stage, over which was the box occupied by Mrs. Jordan.

In the season of 1782-83, she did not appear until the close of February, when in defiance of Mr. Kemble, the acting manager, she brought out a new comedy, entitled *Anna*, said to be the production of a Miss Cuthbertson, aided by Mrs. Jordan. Respecting this composition, disputes ran very high, our heroine maintaining that novelty was essentially requisite, while Mr. Kemble contended that nothing was required beyond the sterling drama, whereby she, as well as himself and Mrs. Siddons, had so permanently established their reputations. There was, indeed, little to recommend this comedy, the leading features of which were the disguise of our actress, and an appeal to her vocal powers —being, as usual, very effective; but the production proving too

vapid to command success, was condemned accordingly. For her benefit this season, our heroine selected Murphy's comedy of *All in the Wrong*, personating *Lady Restless*; and *Nell*, in the farce of *The Devil to Pay*.

On the 29th of November, 1794, was represented a two-act comedy, from the pen of Mrs. Robinson, entitled *Nobody*, wherein Mrs. Jordan sustained a character; but the production was of a nature by no means suited to the public taste, and the piece was, in consequence, laid upon the shelf. On this occasion it became obvious that however kind and sympathising the heart of our actress might be, she was by no means formed to combat this fury of opposition, which was manifested in the representation of the present piece, in no very measured terms. The comedy was tried a second time, but as might be expected, NOBODY came to NOTHING.

At the same juncture, Mrs. Inchbald wrote a farce for Mrs. Jordan, called *The Wedding Day*, wherein she warbled that most effective of ballads, *In the dead of the Night*, which in itself possessed sufficient charms to ensure the success that attended this little production.

Under the continued management of Mr. Kemble, we next find Miss Mellon, afterwards Mrs. Coutts, and now Duchess of St. Albans, treading the boards of Drury Lane, on the 31st of January, 1795, when she personated the character of *Lydia Languish* in *The Rivals*. This essay proved so satisfactory to the leader of the dramatic corps, that the lady secured an engagement for the line of characters sustained by Mrs. Jordan. It is but justice to add that Miss Mellon possessed a very considerable share of theatric talent, and when we add—after speaking of our heroine—that in sustaining the parts of *Rosalind* and the *Romp*, the lady in question maintained a very respectable footing, even before a London audience, we conceive no further panegyric requisite. It may not be improper to remark, that Miss Mellon's features at that period possessed a considerable share of *naivete*, and her figure was slim, elastic, and elegant.

On the 12th of May, was produced the comedy of *First Love*, by Mr. Cumberland, wherein Mrs. Jordan was empowered to display her talents in the pathetic,—having to sustain the character of *Sabina Rosny*, whose parents were supposed to have perished during the French revolution: when alone and unprotected, she had effected her escape to Italy, where an English nobleman betrayed her by means of a false marriage. Some of the scenes introduced were painfully affecting, particularly one between Miss Farren and our actress, concerning which the author himself remarked: "When two such *exquisite* actresses conspired to

support me, I will not be so vain as to presume I could have stood without their help."—*Mem. Vol. II. p. 281.*

In 1796, Mrs. Jordan experienced a miscarriage, and was in consequence detained for a few months from her duties. This circumstance led the writers for the public press to renew their virulent attacks, in the course of which, it was infamously asserted that her non-attendance was the effect of *caprice*; whereas her physician, Dr. Warren, was the sole regulator of her conduct, on that, as well as other occasions.

In February, Mr. Kemble revived the comedy of *The Plain Dealer*, by Wycherly, wherein he personated *Manly* to the *Fidelia* of Mrs. Jordan, on which occasion, according to the statement of Mr. Boaden, "She quite subdued him." The writer above alluded to, then proceeds to state as follows:—"He (Mr. Kemble) told me that she was absolutely irresistible, and I am sure he thought what he said; there had been a good deal of contest, occasionally, between them, and he was sometimes accused of not sufficiently studying, or promoting her interest. Miss Farren often disputed points of management with him; and he had great difficulty to keep the steady course which his own judgment had settled. I freely admit that he had done more for Mrs. Jordan in the way of revival and alteration, than for any other actress, if you even name his sister, Mrs. Siddons."

In a note, Mr. Boaden further adds, in reference to this topic: "What he (Mr. Kemble) said to me upon this occasion, will be rightly understood. He used the language of Yorick, when he was no jester:—'It may seem ridiculous enough to a torpid heart: I could have taken her into my arms, and cherished her, though it was in the open street, without blushing.'" Such an expression from the frigid lips of Mr. Kemble, was a compliment conferred upon the pathos of Mrs. Jordan's style of acting, that speaks volumes in her praise.

From the above period, we have little of consequence to record, until the ever memorable night of the 2nd of April, 1796, on which occasion our heroine personated a character in the pseudo drama of Shakspeare, the production of a youthful impostor under eighteen years of age; in whose work, entitled his *Confessions*, when speaking of our actress, he thus expresses himself:—

"As the native sweetness of her (Mrs. Jordan's) voice had so invariably excited public approbation, I conceived that by writing a ditty expressly for that lady, I should, in a great measure, benefit the piece when represented. In consequence of this supposition, I composed the annexed verses, which were very suitably set to music by William Lindley, Esqr., and received with un-

bounded plaudits when sung by the inimitable actress alluded to, on the night of the representation of the play.

"I should here acquaint the reader, in order to account for the statement above (that the ditty was expressly composed for that personage), that every leading character introduced, was positively written for some certain performer; and it was for the same reason I caused the lady in question to assume the masculine attire, as she was so universally allowed to become the male costume."

The Shakspearian fabricator, therefore, feeling conscious from the applause our actress uniformly received in the execution of ballads (witness "The Cuckoo" song in *As you Like it*,—"Since then I'm doomed," in the *Spoiled Child*,—"In the dead of the night," sung in the *Wedding Day*, &c.), that nothing would tend so much to render his production palatable, as a strain from the lips of our Syren—was prompted to compose the following lines, which were sung by Thalia with her wonted pathos.

BALLAD.

She sung, while from her eye ran down
The silv'ry drop of sorrow;
From Grief she stole away the crown,
Sweet Patience, too, did borrow:—
Pensive she sat,
While Fortune frown'd,
And smiling, woo'd sad Melancholy.

Keen Anguish fain would rive her heart,
And sour her gentle mind;
But Charity still play'd her part,
And Meekness to her soul did bind;
She bowed content,
Heav'd forth one sigh,
Sang, wept, then turned to Melancholy.

Careless, her locks around her hung,
And strove to catch the dewy tear;
The plaintive bird in pity sung,
And breath'd his sorrow in her ear.
Amaz'd she look'd,
And thank'd his care,
Then sunk once more to Melancholy.

The same writer, on another occasion, speaking of our actress, thus expresses himself:—

"I think it but justice in this place to offer my sincere thanks to that lady, for her kind endeavours on a subsequent occasion, when she had to sustain one of the principal characters in the drama. I also beg to state that I shall ever be mindful of her

particular kindness and affability during the visit made to her; as also for her complacency and condescension during my long continuance in the green-room of the theatre, on the representation of my play; when not only her transcendant abilities as an actress were exerted in my behalf before the curtain, but reanimating expressions while in the green-room continually flowed from her lips, in order to rouse me from the mental depression under which I so obviously laboured on that eventful occasion."

In reference to his forgeries, young Ireland further informs us, at page 222 of his *Confessions*, as follows:—

"In consequence of the general astonishment and curiosity excited by the manuscripts, his Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence became desirous of inspecting the papers, which being intimated to Mr. Ireland, a time was fixed upon, when I was made of the party, and with Mr. Samuel Ireland repaired to the apartments occupied by his Royal Highness, in St. James's Palace.

"Having carefully inspected all the documents produced, the usual questions were put to me respecting the original discovery of the manuscripts, in which Mrs. Jordan also joined—when my former statements were, as usual, adhered to. His Royal Highness, I perfectly remember, made numerous objections, and particularly to the redundancy of letters, apparent throughout the papers. To every question, however, the answers were made as usual, and thus the doubts which arose in his Royal Highness's mind, were obviated by Mr. Ireland."

Now, without wishing to offer an intentional affront to Mr. Ireland, we cannot conceive him so imbued with the attributes of folly, as seriously to have told us that his Royal Highness of Clarence was aware of the mode of spelling in the days of our great poet. The simple fact is, MASTER IRELAND, you were desirous of hoaxing anew, by giving perspicuity to a brain wherewith you felt fully aware it was not imbued. All this, however was pardonable; you deceived his Royal Highness, you subsequently confessed the fraud, and therefore tendered the best salve in your power to heal the wound inflicted.

In the month of October, 1797, a new comedy was rehearsed at Drury Lane theatre, from the pen of Frederick Reynolds, Esqr. called *Cheap Living*, in which piece Mrs. Jordan had to sustain the character of *Sir Edward Bloomly*, a boy of fifteen, who pretended to ape all the airs and manners of an adult. She at this period began to feel repugnance at assuming the male costume, and was particularly dissatisfied with the youthful character above mentioned; a circumstance that gave great umbrage to Mr

Wroughton, the acting manager, who, during one of the rehearsals of this piece, said to her in his accustomed frank manner:

"Why, Mrs. Jordan, you are grand—quite the Duchess again this morning."

"Very likely," was the reply, "for you are not the first person who has this very day condescended to honour me, ironically, with the same title."

Assuming her wonted smile, and without the slightest pique being apparent in her gesture, Mrs. Jordan, with all that characteristic humour wherewith she had been gifted by nature, proceeded to make the following statement. That during the morning, having been necessitated to discharge her Irish cook for impertinence: having paid the wages, the indignant purveyor of the palate, taking up a shilling and vehemently banging it upon the table, exclaimed:

"Arrah, now, honey, with this *thirteener*, won't I sit in the gallery, and won't your Royal Grace give me a courtesy, and won't I give your Royal Highness a howl, and a hiss into the bargain!"

It was at this period Miss Farren retired from the boards of Drury Lane theatre, preparatory to her union with the Earl of Derby, when Mrs. Jordan undertook to personate many of the characters that had been sustained by that justly esteemed performer. We particularly recollect seeing our heroine, on more occasions than one, support the part of *Lady Teazle* in the *School for Scandal*, which, although not stamped with that air of fashion and *ton* assumed by her predecessor, was nevertheless marked by a peculiar naivetè that compensated for any lack of the excellencies elicited by Miss Farren.

The following complimentary lines on the diversified talents of Mrs. Jordan, are extracted from a work entitled *Memoirs of the Green Room*, being thus headed:—

A POETICAL CHARACTER.

To make us feel ev'n Garrick's loss no more,
And be what he and Pritchard were before,—
Like them, an equal share of praise to gain,
In mirth's gay sallies or the tragic strain.
This to perform, at last did Jordan come,
And rais'd their buried graces from the tomb.
When *Viola*, to hopeless flames a prey,
Pines with her smother'd love, and fades away.
Each sentence moves us, more from lips like those,
And ev'ry line with added beauty glows!
When wandering wild, to seek what climes afford
Some certain tidings of her captive lord—

Matilda roams;—the melancholy strain,
Wakes in each breast a gently pleasing pain:
At that sad voice, the nerves responsive beat:
"It lends a very echo to the seat
Where love is thron'd,"—So soft it sounds that hence,
The tnnefnl nothings steal the charms of sense.
Again behold the *Country Girl* appears,
With arch simplicity.—The Queen of Tears
Flies far away:—Mirth rules the sportive night,
And all is rapture, laughter, and delight!
'Tis not the actress speaks—'tis Nature all:
No tinsel tricks the wandering sense recall.
Th' illusion lasts throughout,—in ev'ry tone,
Unfetter'd genius stamps her for its own.
Who that had only seen her in some part,
Where, as in *Viola*, she charms the heart:
Where ev'ry step is elegance;—and grace
Informs each feature of that lovely face!
Who that had seen her thus could e'er presume,
To think those speaking eyes could still assume
The rolling vacancy and senseless stare,
That mark the gawkiness of hoyden's air?—
Or who that only had *Matilda* seen,
And the soft tenderness of *Richard's* Queen,
Would e'er conceive that the same form might show,
The rakish freedom of a rattling beau?
Such are thy pow'rs, so vast and unconfin'd,
Quick as a thought, and shifting as the wind!
May wealth and fortune all thy steps attend,
And private worth retain the private friend;
For, if report speaks true, that face imparts
An honest copy from the best of hearts—
The gen'rous feelings of a lib'ral mind,
And solid sense with gay good humour join'd.

The next character in which we find Mrs. Jordan figure was a melo-dramatic cast, namely, *Angela*, in the *Castle Spectre*, a production from the pen of Matthew George Lewis, Esqr., otherwise *Monk* Lewis, son of the Deputy Secretary at war. This piece was produced on the 14th of December, and continued such a favourite as completely to recruit the exhausted treasury of Drury Lane theatre. The peculiar effect of the phantom scene, when Mrs. Powel, as the mother, issued in ghostly guise from the chapel, to administer the benediction on her persecuted daughter, *Angela* (Mrs. Jordan), was productive of an effect upon the audience no tongue can describe; the whole being accompanied by a species of cathedral chaunt from the pen of Jomelli, the composer, that rendered the scene next to superhuman.

After the successful run of this melo-dramatic entertainment, Mrs. Jordan's talents were uniformly called into action to pourtray the *Country Girl*, or figure in the *Confederacy*, the *Will*, &c.,

until the representation of Kotzebue's *Stranger*, on the 24th of March, 1798, afforded her a respite from the unvarying nightly toil to which she had been so long subjected.

The fruits of our heroine's brilliant intercourse, were a quick succession of progeny, which, it will subsequently appear, terminated in a family of ten children,—five males, and an equal number of the opposite sex; who, with the offspring formerly brought to Mr. Ford, and the child supposed to have been the fruit of the infamous Mr. Daly's criminal proceeding,—placed our actress among the rank of those who are termed prolific females.

On the 22nd of March, 1799, appeared a comedy from the pen of Mr. Morris, the Barrister, entitled the *Secret*, wherein our heroine sustained the part of *Rosa*, when it was a general remark that she seemed to have become more than usually partial to the expression of sentimental and affecting passions. The fact is, she sustained the character with such peculiar effect, that the melancholy of her demeanour seemed the result of some hidden circumstances *more intimately connected with* MIND, than the bare mimickry of care and sorrow. The epilogue by Mr. Coleman, was delivered by our heroine with such peculiar effect as to command an encore, a very unusual theatrical incident. At the period to which we refer, we glean the following anecdote from Mr. Boaden's Life of Mrs. Jordan, vol. 2. p. 12.

"It was about this piece *(The Secret)* I remember we had been speaking, when she told me she had another *East Indian* offered at her shrine, which she would trouble me to read. I did so, and we talked the piece over at her town residence in Somerset-street, Portman-square. She had not told me who was the author of the play, but there was that in it which merited consideration. I gave her my opinion frankly, and pointed out the indecorum of the interest; however, though not a moral play, it was written evidently, I said, by a man of talent, and as a benefit piece, preferable to an old one. Mrs. Jordan here, in confidence, informed me that the Duke had taken the trouble to read it at her desire, also; and that we agreed most *decisively* in our opinions. She was in charming spirits, I remember, that morning, and occasionally ran over the strings of her guitar. Her young family were playing about us, and the present Colonel George Fitzclarence (now Earl of Munster), then a child, amused me much with his spirit and strength; he attacked me, as his mother told me, his fine tempered father was accustomed to permit him to do *himself*. He was certainly an infant Hercules. The reader will judge of the pleasure with which I have since viewed his career, as a soldier; and I owe him my best thanks for his instructive and

amusing Journey across India, through Egypt to England, in the winter of 1817–18, which he dedicated to his late Majesty George the Fourth, when Prince Regent. I shall here merely say that his fourth chapter in this work is written with great skill, and possesses that interest which arises from actual facts at critical periods; from difficulties surmounted by patience and exertion; abounding in the terrible and destructive, unexaggerated and minutely detailed. As a moving picture, this division of the work may, with advantage, stand a comparison with the best passages of those who travel to seek effects."

Mrs. Jordan, on the 22nd of April, appeared in the *East Indian*, for her benefit. This comedy was the production of Mr. Lewis, as well as a farce called the *Twins*, which he also presented to Bannister, who adopted it for his benefit night.

Late in this year (1799), Miss Biggs personified *Zorayda*, in the place of our actress, who candidly confessed her predilection for the pathetic, alleging that had she been blessed early in life by an intercourse with refined company, she felt convinced that she might have attained eminence as a tragedian.

Early in the year 1800, our heroine resumed her dramatic career, and on the 10th of May performed in a comedy written by Prince Hoare, called *Indiscretion*. On the 15th of the same month, their Majesties, accompanied by the Princesses, &c., visited Drury Lane theatre, to see *She would and She would not*, and the *Humourist* of Mr. Cobb, a farce that had been recommended by Edmund Burke to Sheridan, in the year 1785. His Majesty had just entered the box, when a man starting up from the front of the pit, levelled a horse pistol at the King, which he discharged. The monarch, advancing to the front of the box, waved his hand to the Queen in order to deter her from entering, and then, to dispel all apprehension among the audience respecting his safety, laying his right hand upon his breast, bowed in acknowledgment for the extreme anxiety manifested by the crowds assembled.

Hatfield was secured, but so great was the general horror evinced, that Mrs. Jordan was obliged to present herself, who gave assurance to the audience "that he was perfectly secured, and properly attended," when the play was ordered to proceed.

The Drury Lane company, and more particularly our heroine, had long lamented that the political sentiments of Mr. Sheridan should prove a bar to the visits of their Majesties to that theatre; however, from speeches that had been delivered in parliament, and the patriotic sentiments put into the mouth of *Rolla* by the manager, it began to be inferred that the King would be led to repeat his visits. This supposition was strengthened by a know-

ledge that the Princesses were particularly anxious to witness the performances of the lady who had so completely captivated their royal brother. Such had been the feeling entertained prior to the above incident, which it was apprehended, would at once put a stop to any further attendance on the part of George the Third and the Royal Family.

Mrs. Jordan, on the 18th of January, 1800, was delivered of a daughter, at Busby Park, which circumstance acted as a bar to her appearance in public, until the 12th of March, when she personated the *Country Girl*, with all the fascinations attending its representation in younger days.

In the above month appeared Cumberland's piece, entitled *Lovers' Resolutions*, in which Mrs. Jordan personified *Racket*, a very appropriate name for the busy character assigned to her in this piece. On the 24th of May, our heroine appeared as *Lady Teazle*, for the benefit of that sterling master of his art, the late Mr. King, who on the night in qnestion, retired from the stage, accompanied by the rapturous plaudits of his admiring auditors. As we conceive the critique of Mr. Boaden sterling on this occasion, we will quote his words from p. 96 of his Life of Mrs. Jordan.

"She (Mrs. Jordan) differed essentially from her predecessors in this—that as to them, the *six months* of fashionable life had totally divested them of their original habits—they did not act the fine lady; they seemed never to have occupied any other station than the one present. Mrs. Jordan thought the rather coarse pleasantries which her Ladyship lavished upon *Sir Peter*, were more in the tone of her *former* than the *present* condition, and she therefore returned to its frank and abrupt discontent; she quarrelled with her old rustic petulance, and showed her natural complexion;—her rouge, and her *finesse* she reserved for artificial life. She wanted the recovering dignity of Abington, to advance before the prostrate screen; but her voice aided her very natural emotion, and though she was not superior in the part, she merited consideration, and to be compared with the *printed* play, rather than the manner in which it had been acted."

During the summer of this year, Mrs. Jordan occasionally performed at the Richmond theatre, and subsequently at Margate, upon the accustomed terms of £180 for six nights, and a clear benefit. It was on this occasion, that while personating the *Country Girl*, our heroine's drapery became ignited, but the flames were so speedily extinguished, that she sustained no injury; when in her accustomed playful manner, she returned her heartfelt thanks to the audience for the sympathy they had evinced in regard to the dangerous situation in which she had been placed.

On the 16th of September, under the direction of Mr. Bannister, Mrs. Jordan opened the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in the character of *Bisarre*, in the comedy of the *Inconstant;* soon after which, Mr. Cherry being engaged, resolved to make our actress his friend; for which purpose he undertook to produce a play, exhibiting our heroine to the greatest advantage, of which we shall shortly have occasion to speak.

Mrs. Jordan, on the 29th of January, 1803, sustained a part in Holcroft's new comedy of *Hear Both Sides*, and on that occasion used every effort to support the piece, which, notwithstanding, proved a dead letter.

On the 16th of April, a five-act comedy was performed, from the pen of Mr. Allingham; a clever production, wherein Mrs. Jordan, as *Emma Harvey*, gave universal satisfaction.

We have previously had occasion to remark, that the philanthropy of the heroine of our tale was unbounded, and that her conduct to the necessitated, in her own profession, was proverbial. An opportunity of this description presented itself in the case of Charles Lee Lewis, a performer of forty years' standing, who, being reduced in circumstances, had a benefit awarded him, when he, for the last time, performed *Lissardo* in the *Wonder*, and Mrs. Jordan, *Viola*. As a part of the entertainment, Mrs. Litchfield undertook the recitation of Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*, when, being ready dressed for the occasion, our heroine complained of the nervous state of her feelings,—in proof of this, seizing Mrs. Litchfield's hand, she placed it upon her heart, exclaiming, "You are a good, kind, creature, will you take the book to the wing, and prompt me in case I am at a loss?" To this Mrs. Litchfield assented, and regularly accompanied her through the part.

We had thus far proceeded in correcting the press for our memoir, when we were permitted to inspect one of the most voluminous collections of manuscript and printed documents on the subject of theatricals, we have ever yet inspected. On referring to the documents respecting Mrs. Jordan, such a multiplicity of genuine articles appertaining to our actress appeared, that we deemed it expedient to profit by the permission accorded, and have in consequence, to introduce a series of statements referring to years of her life already printed off, that we deem it expedient to annex them, until the date at which we closed the last page, viz. 1803; on the attainment of which epoch we shall arrange the fresh information acquired from the above source, in the chronological order of each succeeding year.

One of the earliest efforts of our actress that tended to bring her into repute, was the ballad entitled "To the Green Wood gang wi' me," the first stanza of which runs as follows:—

"To speir my love wi' glances fair,
The woodland laddie came;
He vow'd he would be ay sincere,
And thus he spake his flame:

"The morn is blith my bonny fair,
As blith as blith can be;
To the green wood gang, my lassie dear,
To the green wood gang wi' me," &c.

We now refer to the date of 1785, when the following paragraph on the subject of our Thalia appeared in one of the London daily prints.

"The *lame*, and the *halt*, and the *leprous*, were last Tuesday night invited to bathe in the streams of *Jordan* humour, and to go away happy. What were the salutary effects, they best can tell who stood most in need of them; but if we may be allowed to hazard an opinion, without detracting from the other properties the *Jordan* may possess, we conceive its astringent and emulgent properties to have most powerful influence on the *blind*."

At the same period, another paragraph emanated from the public press, in the following words:—

"The great powers of Mrs. Jordan, cannot be better displayed than in the wonderful contrast in her *Country Girl* and *Viola*. In one, all archness and vivacity;—in another, serious, gentle, and sentimental. We understand, in addition to such diversity of excellence, she is equally happy in opera. There may be greater actresses in some one line, but where shall we find any so deserving of applause in all?"

Speaking of the Duke of Clarence's early predilection for Mrs. Jordan, we find the circumstance thus adverted to at the same period:—

"We have reason to believe the desire of the *Twelfth Night*, and the *Romp* at Drury-lane, this evening, proceeded from a certain personage, who, as Shakspeare says,

"Might put his *wishes*, more into *commands*."

"Certainly the early attention which his Royal Highness was observed to pay to the performances of Mrs. Jordan, reflects the greatest honour on his critical discernment."

Mrs. Jordan's performance of the *Romp*, was unquestionably one of the most complete pieces of comic acting, that was ever exhibited before the public. For a female to assume the masculine attire with propriety, requires a symmetry of person, and perfection of shape, ill suited to the costume worn at the time our heroine flourished. Mrs. Jordan, however, very fortunately proved an exception to this remark; as, to a careless, easy manner of de-

portment, she added the most perfect elegance of form;—so that while the actress excited our admiration, we were no less captivated by the woman.

Speaking of our actress in male attire, a paragraph to the following effect appeared:—

"As Mrs. Jordan so often chooses a *breeches* part, we cannot, as men, but applaud her penetration. Females should envy her; for she has the fortunate privilege to be above censure, and therefore heedless of what may fall from the tongue of malice; but if other ladies were as openly to avow their partiality, as their wishes or ideas might dictate, the world would not only smile, but recriminate."

The following critique on Mrs. Jordan's performances, appeared in the "Morning Herald," of the 26th of October, of the year 1785:—

"With respect to Mrs. Jordan, the reports of the different editors, though short, were full and discriminating; yet in no point were they inconsistent. All were equally favourable to her,—none fulsome. She is universally allowed to possess a figure, small perhaps, but neat and elegant, as was remarkably conspicuous where she was dressed as a boy, in the third act. Her face, if not beautiful, is said by some to be pretty, and by some, pleasing, intelligent, or impressive. Her voice, if not peculiarly sweet, is not harsh;—if not strong, is clear and equal to the extent of the theatre. She has much archness, and gave every point of the dialogue with the best comic effect. She is a perfect mistress of the *Jeu de Theatre*, and improved to the uttermost all the ludicrous situations with which the *Country Girl* abounds; from such premises there is, and can be but one conclusion that she is a most valuable acquisition to the public stock of innocent entertainment."

A correspondent on the 1st of March, 1786, sent the following letter to the "Morning Herald," addressed to Mrs. Jordan:—

"Madam,—You will permit me to reduce into this epistolary form, the general sentiments of this city, with regard to you, and thus to convey to you the very flattering testimony which every private circle, and every public assembly bears to your dramatic excellence. My only motives herein, are these:—first, to give vent to expressions of that admiration which your playing never fails to create:—secondly, to give to merit that commendation which is its due; for though conscious abilities in a considerable degree do reward themselves, yet one who, like you, is honourably emulous of public approbation, derives a powerful addition of atisfaction from an express and formal declaration of it; and

though I am not specially appointed secretary to the public, yet it is an office that lies open to anyone, and I have, in the present instance, sufficient credentials, which may be found in any company within the metropolis:—lastly, the delight you afford, naturally creates an interest in your success; and I have a pleasure in thinking that this letter may possibly procure you in the reading, a momentary flush of that satisfaction and honest pride, which I presume you are susceptible of, in common with sensible and ingenuous hearts.

"You perceive that you are a great favourite amongst us. There is no company where Mrs. Jordan is not named with uncommon applause. But that you may the better know what particular qualities you possess to charm so extensive an audience, give me leave to inform you, that they are principally your remarkable skill in apprehending nature, and your extreme good humour. Wherever you exert the former talent, I am inclined to think that you will allow the best criterion of good acting, to be the favourable sentiments of an audience, delivered from the first impressions of nature, and not entirely a system of professional rules, which, in every line usurp a strange authority, and I fear, have too much weight in the dramatic line with some, who, in the representation of natural characters, are not content to make nature only their model, nor to observe her only with their own eyes; but the case is very different with you: your action proceeds so exactly and nicely from your characters which you have the art of seizing, of representing to yourself, and of adopting, with such wonderful justness and precision, that you rather seem to realise the circumstances of the drama, with regard to yourself, than merely to accommodate your action to a character you assume. I am sensible my language will immediately betray my ignorance of the dramatic art; but your nice judgment and observation will turn this very circumstance to advantage, when you see how you are understood and tasted by those who possess no other standard by which to try your real merit, than ordinary life.

"Your other quality is that of good humour;—after all, the best recommendation from the stage, and which best secures the friendship of the public. We conceive you without those airs, and that caprice which in almost every instance, produce in the end a lasting rupture between the performer and his audience. You appear without them, and possess a fund of good humour, which displays itself in the lively repetition of several fatiguing parts, which require an extraordinary exertion of the mind and spirits.

"Your sentence, as I convey it to you, is not to be despised, for it is pronounced by a jury of your peers; so far, I mean, as they are acquainted with pure and genuine nature, and think her the best interpreter of herself.

"In conclusion of this long letter, which nevertheless, I hope will not appear quite unreasonable,—let me entreat you, from the most unselfish motives, to persevere, and cultivate these admirable qualities; and that you and the public may remain ever on the most cordial terms, is the earnest wish of one of your greatest ADMIRERS."

The following is a copy of Mrs. Jordan's address to the audience of Edinburgh, after the play of the *Belle's Stratagem*, in 1786.

WRITTEN AND SPOKEN BY HERSELF.

Presumption 'tis, in learning's seat,
For me the muses to entreat;—
Yet, bold as the attempt may be,
I'll mount the steed of poesy;
And, as my Pegasus is small,
If stumbling—I've not far to fall.

Hear then, ye Nine, the boon I ask,
While (throwing off the comic mask),
With gratitude, I here confess,
How much you've heighten'd my success.

By seeking thus, my sentence now,
You've heap'd new laurels on my brow;
Nor is the northern sprig less green,
Than that which in the south was seen;
For though your sun may colder be,
Your hearts I've found as warm for me.

On one of Mrs. Jordan's last night's performances, at the Edinburgh theatre, she was presented with a gold medal, bearing the following engraved inscription:—

"*A small Tribute from the Admirers of Genius to the Child of Nature.*"

We are told that in 1786, Mrs. Jordan had brought into the theatre, since her engagement which took place the preceding year, no less a sum than £5,000, a circumstance that furnished sanguine hopes of future entertainment to the public, as well as emolument to the proprietors of that establishment.

The following just tribute of praise to Mrs. Jordan's private character, appeared in a daily paper, in the month of October:—

"Mrs. Jordan's merit has been to the managers of Drury-lane. a perfect magnet of attraction, and like a magnet, has suffered no sensible diminution in its attracting powers. We have heard

much, at times, of the various private virtues of different performers; let it be remembered, therefore, that this lady likewise does not rest all her pretentions to public favour, on her abilities as an actress, but on those to which as a woman and as a member of society, she is so highly entitled. A person who has known her for some years, delineates her character as possessed of the greatest sincerity, humanity, and good nature; and as he early saw, so he early foretold, that her merit would one day raise her to the situation which she now fills so much to the public satisfaction, as well as to her own advantage."

Many ill-natured aspersions having been disseminated by those who envied the celebrity our actress had acquired, the following letter appeared in the diurnal undermentioned:—

To the "Morning Herald."

"Mr. Editor,—A variety of paragraphs having lately appeared in the newspapers, tending to convey an insinuation that I have declined performing again at Drury-lane theatre, until I am announced in a manner different from what I have been;—I beg the favour of you to insert this letter, as a positive denial of such charge, and of the supposed circumstances on which it is founded. A long continuance of severe illness, has alone been the cause of my absenting myself from my duty to the proprietors and the public. I am, Sir, &c.,

Gower-st., Dorothea Jordan."
Feb. 4, 1788.

The following complimentary stanzas, addressed to Mrs. Jordan, were first handed about in MS., and appeared in print on the 11th of August, 1788.

Embosom'd oft the sullied gem,
Earth's dull recess conceals,
Till the sun's penetrating beam,
The brilliant spark reveals.

The innate beauties of the mind,
Thus spurious powers control,
Till happily, some ray refin'd
Illuminates the soul.

How long the fashionable choice,
Tom-boy and Hoyden reign'd;
How long thy wiles, the public voice,
Hypolita sustain'd!

Till *Viola* beautified the scene
And *Rosalind*, the bower;
Thy blossoms, Jordan, had we seen,
But not thy fairest flower.

In the *Romp's* flippant, wanton dress,
The counterfeit is shown;
Whilst the sweet charms of tenderness,
And love—are all thy own.

Cheltenham, G. J.
Aug. 8th, 1788.

Mrs. Jordan, during the residence of their Majesties and the Princesses at Cheltenham, in the above year, had the good fortune to secure the Royal favour so successfully, that it was expected their presence at Drury-lane would be frequent in the course of the following season.

In the month of September following, our actress was waited upon by Boles Watson, Esqr., manager of the Cheltenham theatre, who presented her with an elegant medallion locket, richly set on one side with fine pearls, in the centre of which was a beautiful painting of the comic muse, from the original picture executed by Sir Joshua Reynolds. On the reverse was placed, in blue enamel, an oval of fine brilliants, and in the centre, the following inscription in gold letters on white enamel:—

"*Presented to Mrs. Jordan, Thalia's Sweetest Child, September 10th, 1788.*"

The design and workmanship gave general satisfaction to the noblemen and gentlemen who were subscribers to the above token, of the very exalted estimation in which they held the unrivalled talents of our enchanting actress.

In 1789, a misunderstanding took place between our heroine and Mr. Jackson, manager of the Edinburgh theatre, at which period she penned a letter, dated from Chester, wherein she mentions not having seen the above gentleman's public statement of the cause of their disagreement, which originated in the height of illiberality on his part. In the communication alluded to, she denies most of the assertions published by Mr. Jackson,—relates the great difficulty she encountered in procuring from him any pecuniary remuneration,—that in consequence she found herself compelled to *borrow* money, in order to discharge her Edinburgh engagements, and that the very identical bill he was compelled to give her at Glasgow, for £100, was protested in London, though the manager made a boast of his unvarying punctuality in all pecuniary transactions. Mrs. Jordan concludes in the following manner, whence it may be inferred, that her equanimity of temper had experienced a violent shock, as she was not accustomed to use acrimonious terms.

"I have now entirely done with this subject, and, thank God, with Mr. Jackson, who I hope, by his punctuality, to pay his *at*

present protested note, will not compel me to resume any acquaintance with him, by the methods the law points out!

"P. S.—As to Mr. Jackson's comparative statement of the receipts, I am no judge;—I can only say that the houses were apparently very good, when I performed. Perhaps it would not have been amiss, but *rather fairer*, if he had said that in the year 1785, from whence he drew Mrs. Siddon's account, that lady performed at the advanced London prices."

The following poetical *bagatelle* has been ascribed to Murphy, but whether correctly or not, we are unable to substantiate.

AN ACROSTIC.

J–ust emblem of all lovely nature,
O–rdain'd to charm by ev'ry feature,
R–eigning unrivall'd in thy art,
D–elight of ev'ry feeling heart;
A–pplause await and crown thy wishes,
N–ations accord, "She all possesses!"

During this year was issued a pamphlet, now of extreme rarity, under the title of—"*Jordan's Elixir of Life, and Cure for the Spleen; or a Collection of all the Songs sung by Mrs. Jordan, since her first appearance in London.—Published by William Holland, No. 50, Oxford-street, 1789.*" This production contains forty-one ballads, duets, &c., and is illustrated by a whole length engraving of our actress, in the character of *Sir Harry Wildair*, to which is prefixed a very laconic biographical sketch of the lady. While adverting to the subject of engraved portraits that exist of Mrs. Jordan, in the superb collection whence our latter information has been derived, we have enumerated thirty-one prints of the subject of our biography, some of which are now very scarce.

The following song, introduced by Mrs. Jordan in the part of *Polly Honeycomb*, in 1790, was said to be the production of her own muse, and we consequently deem it admissible in the present memoir.

SONG.

When late the wretched youth
Breath'd vows of endless truth,
  All on the bare boards kneeling;—
Protesting, sobbing, sighing,
'Mid flames and torment dying;
  Sure it was wond'rous feeling—
  Ah! pity the wretched youth.

O, had you heard him swear,
And call me "cruel fair,"
  So adverse to his loving;—

His eyes with madness glaring,
His hair all frantic tearing,
You'd swear 'twas wond'rous moving;
And pity the wretched youth.

But when a knife he drew,
To pierce his heart so true,
In wild disorder raving;—
His face with tears all flowing,
His nose all red with blowing;
Could I refrain from saving,
In pity, the poor youth?

On the 20th of October, appeared in the Morning Herald, the following composition, entitled,

SEPULCHRAL ANTICIPATION.

"Near a monument to MRS. CLIVE, is a superb and richly decorated urn, entwined with a wreath of fading flowers, and embossed with a figure of DEATH trampling on the mask and emblems of COMEDY. On the tomb is the subsequent

INSCRIPTION.

Sacred to the Memory
OF
MRS. DOROTHY JORDAN,

Late of Drury Lane Theatre.
Poor injured mortality!
Snatched
From the fostering embrace of
Public admiration,
In the full vigour of her attraction
That raised it;—
Stop, gazer,
And behold the little tyrant of hearts,
The favoured nymph of EUPHROSYNE;
Thus mournfully entombed!
Disdaining
To wear the trammels of science, which too often
Prevent the intention, and restrain
The effect of the Drama;
Her exertions were
The dictates of nature,
Whose steps it was her profession to follow:
Like the "Child of Fancy,
In wood notes wild,"
She inspired the hearts of her hearers,
With the warmth of sensibility,
And the transports of mirth:
The stern speculation of the pedantic Critic, (that too often blasts *the Genius of the Stage*, to maintain a consequence and

authority, equally base and unwarrantable)
Lost in the magic of her talents,
Would smooth its wrinkled front,
And, like honest Laughter,
Shake its bursting sides:
The jovial heart
That gave lustre to her scenic charms,
Cherished a sweetness of disposition,
Which rendered her amiable in private life;
Her gaiety was decent,
As the heart that prompted it was sincere;
And the frolic humour of the characters
It was her province to represent,
As an ACTRESS,
She scorned to degrade the dignity
That belonged to her own, as a WOMAN.
In all her rosy train,
THALIA had not such a Nymph.
Tho' traveller, thou hadst not witnessed
The powers of which thou read'st,
Refuse not the tribute of a sigh
To her whose voice was
Public joy:
Nor quit these hallowed mansions,
Till in the ardour of a STERNE,
And the language of a SHAKSPEARE,
Thou hast exclaim'd,
"ALAS! POOR JORDAN!"

This monument is the tribute of
An impartial admirer,
Unconnected with the theatre,
Whose only design was to join in that
Approbation of Mrs. Jordan,
Which the public so unanimously testified,
And which her exertions
So justly merited.

We cannot help remarking, that the writer of the above inscription, in the year 1790, little dreamed how appropriate the conclusive line, "ALAS! POOR JORDAN!" would subsequently prove to her melancholy end, and how fitting would be the ejaculation, if engraved upon her tomb at St. Cloud.

In the above year, on the 20th of March, was first performed, for our actress's benefit, the amusing piece of the *Spoilt Child*, attributed to Mr. Ford, but which the daily prints declared Mrs. Jordan had avowed, as being her own production, when, it is added, she received the congratulations of her Brethren and Sisterhood of the sock and buskin.

As a proof that Mrs. Jordan was uniformly received as the lawful wife of Mr. Ford, several paragraphs appeared in the summer of 1791, of which we give the annexed by way of sample:—

"Mrs. Jordan has withstood the unbounded offers of a certain personage; so much to her own credit, and to the satisfaction of a certain gentleman, to whom she has for some years *afforded* her smiles, that the latter has, from motives of gratitude and love, introduced her as his *wife*, and in that character she has been received in the most fashionable circles."

Among the innumerable tirades that appeared in the newspapers, on the subject of Mrs. Jordan's connection with the Duke of Clarence, we give the following specimens:—

"*A favourite comic actress*, if old Goody Rumour is to be trusted, has thought proper to put herself under the protection of a *distinguished Sailor*, who *dropped anchor* before her last summer, at Richmond. As she resolutely held out however, at that time, though the assault was vigorously pushed, perhaps this is only a flying report; and the lady thinks there is more security in a private *ford*, than in the *open sea*."

"*Little Pickle's* assumed character of the *Tar*, was a prelude only to her future nautical fame; for, though pressed into the service, she has consented, we find, to be close moored under the guns of the *Royal Commodore*."

"A correspondent observes, that what was only FORD*able* some time ago, is now capable of bearing a *first rate!*"

"The part of *Mrs. Ford* has been supported with so much decorum at Richmond, by Mrs. Jordan, that many respectable families there are disposed to consider her as *quite the character*."

In reference to the above topic, we now beg leave to give some interesting documents which were ushered into publicity with the prefatory matter annexed.

"As a very considerable part of the public always take an interest in the private characters of those who live by contributing to the public amusement, such persons have a right to expect that no part of their private conduct should be represented in a more unfavourable point of view than it deserves.

"Mrs. Jordan's family affairs having been lately the subject of much conversation, it is but justice to her to show that whatever opinion may be entertained of her discretion, she has never been deficient in the duties of a mother.

"The following letter from the gentleman who has the best means of knowledge, will clear up this part of the business to the satisfaction of the most scrupulous:—

MR. FORD'S LETTER TO MRS. JORDAN.

"Lest any insinuations should be circulated to the prejudice of Mrs. Jordan, in respect to her having behaved improperly towards her children, in regard to pecuniary matters, I hereby declare that her conduct has, in that particular, been as laudable, generous, and as like a fond mother, as in her present situation it was possible to be. She has indeed given up for their use, every sixpence she has been able to save from her theatrical profits; she has also engaged herself to allow them £550 per annum; and at the same time settled £50 a year upon her sister. It is but bare justice to her for me to assert this, as the father of those children.

Octr. 14, 1791. (Signed) RICHARD FORD."

To Mrs. Jordan:—

"In gratitude for the care Mrs. Jordan has ever bestowed upon my children, it is my consent and wish that she should, whenever she pleases, see and be with them, provided her visits are not attended by any circumstances which may be improper to them, or unpleasant to me. RICHARD FORD."

On the 3rd of November, the following paragraph appeared in one of the morning prints, which subsequently performed the round of all the other diurnals.

"The connection between *Little Pickle* and her new FRIEND has been paragraphed in every public shape, and unless something extraordinary should occur, may now be dropped.—We have only to add, that as *Banker* to *her Highness*, he actually received her *week's salary* from the *Treasurer*, on Saturday last!!!"

On the 13th of the above month, the annexed impromptu, &c., were published on the same subject.

ON A CERTAIN PERSON'S RECEIVING A THEATRICAL SALARY.

As Jordan's high and mighty squire,
Her play-house profits deign to skim;
Some folks audaciously enquire,
If *he* keeps *her*, or *she* keeps *him!*

PINDAR JUNR.

"It is said positively to be a fact, that the actress whose *elevated connection* has lately engrossed so much newspaper comment, has

not *touched*, and is in little likelihood of obtaining any pecuniary aid from her new protector; and that besides her domestic support, to which her own salary contributes, she has only procured an annuity for her eldest child, for whom she is supposed to be indebted to an Irish manager of well-known gallantry."

As some palliative for the scurrility with which the daily prints abounded in regard to Mrs. Jordan, some admirers were found to espouse her cause, and among such paragraphic matter, we beg to insert the following:—

"Among the ungenerous attempts which have been used to lower Mrs. Jordan in the public estimation, may be ranked the insinuation that she has made a *mercenary* agreement with her present protector—admitting that the public had anything to do with the business; her calumniators, however, if they have erred through ignorance, must be covered with shame when they know that although she has settled *half* her *future* income from her profession, and *all* that she has saved in it, *upon her children*;—she has absolutely rejected every idea of settlement, or pecuniary aid for herself. Her independence is in her talents, the *unrivalled excellence* of which is undoubtedly the real cause of so much unmanly scurrility having lately appeared against her."

At the close of a biographical sketch of Mrs. Jordan, speaking of her private character in reference to the Duke of Clarence, we find the following statement:—

"In private life, Mrs. Jordan has the best opinion of the best characters:—towards the Duke she conducts herself in the most faithful and endearing manner—neither superfluous in expenditure, nor extravagant in expectation, she lives as the nature of her connection will allow; and it may be said of her, what of many *ladies legally* connected cannot be said—

'Tho' she boasts not the *name*, she's the *truth* of a wife.'

"Unfriendly to the parade of high life, she is contented to forego the wretched ostentation of less exalted minds, for the more tranquil pleasures of domestic retirement. She is a fond and tender mother, and with her children she loves to pass away those hours, which might be less pleasureably expended in the splendid delusions of fashionable life."

"In addition to these commendable dispositions, she has the credit of being liberal to the necessitous, and of uniting to the proper dignity of conscious *talent*, the engaging condescension of lady-like *manners*."

"It is by the ignorant, that worth most usually is injured. Humanity has a natural bias to calumniate, and if the report of a

public character is *balanced* between praise and censure, opinion turns the scale, and fixes the *opprobrium*. It is by those who know her *not* that Mrs. Jordan is discredited;—those who *do* know her, never can know enough of her good qualities, her conciliatory temper, her engaging manners, her readiness to oblige, and her willingness to assist, the open generosity of her *hand*, the superior *liberality of her mind*."

The season after Mrs. Jordan had accepted the protection of his Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence, she did not perform, and it was reported that it was her intention to relinquish the stage, as the Duke had provided for her. In consequence of this report, Mrs. Jordan soon after published the following letter, directed to Mr. Sheridan, wherein she explains the occasion of her non-appearance on the boards.

"SIR,—From the very handsome manner in which you acceded to my proposals, and as I conceived, concluded my engagement, I flattered myself I should have no difficulty to encounter in immediately entering into my agreement with you;—an event I have waited for with increased anxiety, from the circumstance of having, through your liberality, been for some time in the receipt of a very large salary, without being permitted to perform.

"I am totally at a loss to account for the conduct of the manager, in any other way than his *continued disinclination* to let me appear in any new character whatever,—a complaint I have often been constrained to make to you, and you have as often acknowledged the justice of it; and, in our last negociation, endeavoured effectually to remove, but without success.

"As a duty I owe myself and the public, I mean to publish a copy of this letter, to serve as a simple, but *fair* contradiction to some malicious reports that are circulated, insinuating that I have withdrawn myself from their protection, a circumstance I have had every reason to be proud, of which I shall ever retain the most grateful remembrance, accompanied by the sincerest regret at being deprived of the happiness of manifesting, in the duties of my profession, the truth of this *assertion*. You, sir, I make no doubt, will candidly confess, that I have already been too much tormented with regard to this engagement, and also that from this unnecessary delay in bringing forward the comedy, that it is now void; and when I assure you that my situation in the theatre has, for a considerable time, been made very irksome to me, and that should I attempt to continue in it, *out of respect to you*, I should subject myself to still greater perplexities, which it is not in your power to prevent; I am therefore confident, that you will

release me from that kind of embarrassment, which the liberality of your conduct towards me, makes me suffer in the justice of my wish to quit the *Haymarket theatre.*

"In complying with the above request, you will greatly add to the favours already conferred on,

Somerset-street, Sir,
Jan. 29, 1793. Yours, &c.,—DORA JORDAN."

On the 13th of December, 1791, the following paragraph appeared in one of the morning papers:—

"A FACT."

"The *Naval Officer*, who too often infests the scenes of the Haymarket theatre, to the annoyance of everyone that belongs to the house, *but one*, had the modesty the other day, to desire Mr. S——— to forbid Mr. Ford the privilege of appearing behind the scenes. Mr. S——— very properly told the naval officer, that Mr. Ford's *behaviour*, as a *gentleman*, precluded such a prohibition; and that in point of *right*, Mr. F. had as much pretention as (Mr. S———) himself."

It appears that there was some idea of introducing Mrs. Jordan to the public in the character of an oratorio singer, as the following statement will manifest:—

"Amidst the many contradictory reports which have been circulated respecting Mrs. Jordan's performance at the ensuing oratorios, we have been able to ascertain the following, as being the exact state of the business as it at present stands. Some time since, Dr. Arnold and Mr. Linley applied to Mrs. Jordan, requesting her assistance as a principal singer for the oratorios at Drury-lane; after repeated refusals on her part, from a sense of her inexperience in that line, it was proposed that Dr. Parsons, whose reputation stands so high in the musical world, should hear her sing, and that his judgment respecting her voice should be conclusive. The trial was accordingly made, and every assurance of success given; Dr. Parsons himself undertaking to give her the necessary instructions; at the same time the Doctor and her friends have advised her not to throw away the attractions of her first appearance, unless she can be supported by a proper band, and vocal performers of reputation and consequence,—if such can be engaged so late in the season, and Dr. Parsons approves of them as proper assistance to his new scholar, Mrs. Jordan will certainly perform this season, otherwise the curiosity of the public will remain ungratified until next year."

In reference to the Royal friend of our actress, we annex a ludicrous skit that appeared on the 1st of May, 1792.

"*Little Pickle's* carriage is to be immediately decorated with something like *heraldic bearings*:—a *crest* is already fixed upon, and what can be more appropriate than a *sea gull!*"

The annexed well-turned letter appeared in a morning print, on the 19th of March, 1794, two days subsequent to the date it bore, being written from the Thatched-house tavern.

"TO MRS. JORDAN."

"Madam,—As you and your friends may possibly be at a loss to account for the abuse that has been for some time thrown out against you, I will endeavour to explain the mystery, and how you may avoid it in future. Among the various admonishers you have had, not one of them has possessed courage or candour enough to lay before you your *real and numberless offences*. It is fairly said, if we do not know our faults, *how are we to mend them?* This ignorance shall no longer be your plea; and I flatter myself, that in the execution of the task I have undertaken, every friend to you and truth will acknowledge the justice of the accusations I am about to bring against you. Without further preface, then, give me leave to ask you, *how dare* you possess such *brilliant talents*, and exert them with the success you usually do? How dare you *deserve*, and consequently *receive* the largest salary given at either theatre? These are two capital offences to which even your friends will acknowledge you must plead *guilty*. The next is that you never think it *necessary* to pay for the panegyric of any *single person*, but have the *insolence* to *remain* perfectly happy with the approbation of the audience.

"So much for your public misdemeanors, your private ones are still more extraordinary and aggravating, for have you not had the presumption, all your life, to conduct yourself most affectionately and tenderly towards your relatives,—liberally and benevolently towards the distressed? Your impertinent conduct, moreover, in the theatre is *monstrous*. How dare you presume to depart from an established rule in your high station, by being mild and civil to the lowest performer in it? You can no longer be at a loss to account for the abuse, or its origin:—you must *dispossess* yourself of all *these faults*, and of the public partiality, before you can hope to be popular; and if you had been fortunate enough to have attempted a high conquest, and *failed in the attempt*, it would have rendered you (with the above *set*) the most amiable of *women*, established your *moral character*, however glaring any other connection might be, provided, like the gipsies, it was confined within the pale of your own profession.

VERITAS."

The annexed epigram, said to have been from the pen of Peter Pindar (Dr. Walcott), appeared on the 6th of November, 1794, soon after Mrs. Jordan's appearance in the character referred to:

EPIGRAM,

On seeing Mrs. Jordan in the character of Rosalind, at Drury Lane Theatre.

Had Shakspeare's self at Drury been,
While JORDAN play'd each varied scene,
He would have started from his seat,
And cried—'That's *Rosalind* complete!'

Soon after the above, appeared these lines, under the following head:—

On Mrs. Jordan's exquisite recital of the Epilogue to the Rivals.

To comic JORDAN'S laughing eye,
The tear of pity stole;
But in revenge she drew a sigh,
From each spectator's soul.

In reference to the procrastinated warfare that existed between Mr. Kemble, then acting manager of Drury Lane Theatre, and Mrs. Jordan, as well as the conduct of the former in regard to the drama of *Vortigern*, performed on the 2nd of April, 1796, we deem it expedient to insert the following letter.

"Kemble can never stand in the first rank of favourites till he evinces greater abilities, and less self-conceit. Before that period arrives, he will constantly meet with mortifications whenever he contends with a performer of Mrs. Jordan's merits, who is singly capable of supporting the interests of a theatre, as he has himself most injudiciously proved by placing her perpetually in situations where all around her were drawbacks, instead of assistants. If any dispute between actors be brought before the public, their motto must of course be,—'*Spectemur agendo*,'—'Let our performances be the test,'—and upon this ground, the question has long been completely divided between the contending parties.

"Next to professional talents, professional humility, and a zeal for the gratification of those to whom they owe their very existence—will always be the greatest recommendation of persons in such a situation. In this particular, as well as in many others, Mrs. Jordan appears to me to exceed almost all her contemporaries; while Mr. Kemble is as notoriously blameable for the reverse. When I instance (the most recent of numerous examples) the night on which the famous *Kynge Vortigerne* was announced for general condemnation; I would, by no means, be understood to be an advocate for its authenticity; on the contrary, my own private

opinion perfectly coincides with the fiat of the audience,—but the play having once been accepted, no matter for what reason—by the proprietors, and eagerly expected by the world, what could be more indecorous, to say nothing worse (considering from whom, and for what he receives a large salary) than the behaviour of Mr. Kemble throughout?—Nor could a more striking contrast to his overweening fastidiousness possibly be exhibited, than in the deportment of Mrs. Powell and the inimitable actress, his jealousy of whom has occasioned the present stricture:—

'——— Though I wish thy death,
I will not be thy executioner.'

While nothing short of downright MURDER would satiate Mr. Kemble's thirst of vengeance. To every liberal spectator, whether credulous or incredulous as to the *old trunk* and its contents, such conduct could not fail of being most disgustingly offensive. The audience, in order to form their judgment, had no need to take their cue from his 'wreathed smiles,' or even from Mr. Malone's octavo:—

'Non obtusa adeo gestamus pectora pœnni,
Nectam aversus equos Tyria, sol jungit ab urbe!'

"I cannot quit this subject without remarking that I have scarcely ever observed a more glaring instance of clumsy misrepresentation, than in a statement made of the loss likely to be sustained by the lovers of the drama, *in consequence*, forsooth, *of this fracas*. A long list of performers is pompously held forth, as following Mr. Kemble into retirement upon this, his threatened secession,—whereas, most unfortunately, not only all those who frequent the theatre, but all who cast their eye upon a newspaper, have repeatedly been informed that every individual of that list has, for some time past, resolved upon quitting the stage, at the conclusion of the present season, and that too, before *Hamlet* (which it seems, was the bone of contention) was even put into rehearsal. Miso Puff."

In regard to the dispute respecting *Hamlet*, we beg leave to insert the ensuing paragraph:--

"There have lately been very high and violent disputes between Mr. Kemble and Mrs. Jordan, on the subject of *Hamlet*. The former, it seems, started some objections to the latter announcing it for her benefit, he having already advertised it for his night. The arguments on both sides proceeded to such a length, that the question became quite confused; and the only equitable decision the managers could pronounce petween the contending parties, was that *neither* of them have the disputed piece. In consequence

of the verdict, the *Deputy* is said to be so much offended, as to talk of resigning his *important functions*."

This affair terminated by Mrs. Jordan choosing the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*, in which she, for the first time, sustained the latter character, concerning which we find the following statement published at the time, viz.: the 20th of April, 1796, five days subsequent to the representation :—

"The assuming any new part or piece for a benefit, is scarcely even worth any observation ;—but when the house adopts either, it becomes a fair subject of criticism. Mrs. Jordan, in every delicate touch of sensibility in her performances, has been so accustomed to approbation, that it was natural enough she should attempt the most delicate of all characters—that of *Juliet ;* but beautiful and unequalled as she is on such occasions, the brilliancy is heightened only by the shade that surrounds it ; in *Juliet*, all is elegant refinement, while her *forte* is mere simplicity not rude but untaught. Her figure and her features are not those of the 'great Capulet's daughter,'—still she showed us much to admire."

We have previously remarked that our actress was at all times ready to step forward in behalf of the distressed, an instance of this kind occurred in the month of May, 1799, respecting which we insert the following comment :—

"Great as is her theatrical merit, Mrs. Jordan deserves more of public applause for the natural display of her professional humanity, than for the superiority of her powers in the mimic art. Who that sees her transferring those powers to Covent Garden Theatre in aid of the widow and orphans of the late Mr. Follet, but must admire her active benevolence, and lament that so forcible an example is so unfrequently imitated."

In the month of June, 1800, we again find our actress enlisted in the cause of humanity, as the ensuing paragraph will demonstrate :—

"For all benevolent purposes, Mrs. Jordan is ever ready and gratuitous ; notwithstanding her previous exertions this week, which have been devoted to objects of the same character, she comes cheerfully forth at Covent Garden Theatre in aid of that very useful establishment, the Lying-in Hospital, at Bayswater. Of this lady may be repeated what Dr. Johnson has said of Levet, that—

> In misery's darkest caverns known,
> Her useful aid is ever nigh,
> Where hopeless anguish proves its groan,
> And lonely want retires to die."

After a long absence from her theatrical avocations,—Mrs. Jordan, on the 11th of March, 1801, appeared as *Peggy*, in the comedy of the *Country Girl*, when so irresistible proved the attraction, that at a very early hour the house was crowded to an overflow.

On her appearance she was greeted by the splendid crowd with reiterated testimonials of admiration and respect; and throughout the entire performance, was warmly and universally applauded. She looked extremely well, and exhibited with the most fascinating effect that irresistible playfulness of manner, those winning gestures, and incomparable diversity of sweet and silvery tones for which she stood so eminently unrivalled, and proclaimed her the favourite offspring of Thalia.

In the month of August, 1802, while performing at Margate, in the *Country Girl*, Mrs. Jordan met with an accident which had nearly terminated in a fatal manner. In the scene near the conclusion of the piece, where she spoke from a window, the flame from one of the lamps behind the scenes caught the train of her dress, and she was instantly in a blaze.—The one side was totally consumed before it could be quite extinguished. Happily she sustained no other injury than what arose from terror. The audience testified their extreme interest for her safety, and throughout the whole house there was a general expression of alarm. Notwithstanding the accident, Mrs. Jordan sustained the part, though evidently labouring under considerable depression of spirits.

Towards the close of November, in the above year, Mrs. Jordan, for the first time, appeared in the character of *Mrs. Sullen* in the *Beaux Stratagem*. It was only an expectation of pleasure beyond all bounds, founded on her well known unrivalled performances that could have occasioned disappointment, if any was experienced. Had the essay in question been her original *entree*, the audience would have been enraptured, and the night would have been pronounced the most memorable in the annals of the stage that had occurred for a series of years. The character in question had not appeared of so much importance since the secession of Miss Farren.

The author appeared to have had her alone in his thoughts, and to have invented the fable and introduced the other persons of the drama, only for the purpose of displaying her wit, her frankness, her gaiety, her happy talent for raillery, her powerful love of pleasure, and her yielding sense of propriety. At the same time we must confess that her delineation of the character did not, in our eyes, attain perfection. *Mrs. Sullen* is a woman of fashion ;

—she had been buried fourteen months ;—but supposing that she did not often, in that lapse of time, dance and chat, and flirt with the French officers, she had previously moved in the first circles about London, and acquired all the elegant ease of high-life. We by no means say that she should confine herself to parts of broad humour, or deep pathos ;—but certainly on that occasion, the toss of our actress's head, and the flirt of her fan, did not remind us of the court ; she did not manage her eyes with all the skilful freedom of a modern lady of ton, and at times too, she did not appear altogether free from embarrassment to find proper employment for her hands. If, indeed, there was any of this awkwardness discoverable, it was in considerable degree owing to the situation in which *Mrs. Sullen* is placed, and the speeches put into her mouth not being at all times consistent with delicacy, but calculated to distress the female who performs the part, and her who witnesses its performance. In fact, the *Beaux Stratagem* is throughout the most licentious piece tolerated on the stage, and we know not if its dramatic excellence ought to be considered as a sufficient apology for its immoral tendency.

Mrs. Jordan appeared in no new character during this year, when Frances, her eldest daughter, came of age, for whom she took a handsome mansion in Golden-square, that lady having subsequently become the wife of Mr. Alsop. With Frances, her sisters, Lucy and Dora, resided when absent from their mother, whom they usually attended at Bushy Park. It is said that an elderly gentleman, named Bettsworth, at this juncture, tendered Mrs. Jordan a very ample fortune, in the event of her taking his name, and becoming his representative.

Having mentioned Mrs. Alsop, it may not be irrelevant here to remark, that at a subsequent period of life, she attempted the stage, assuming the cast of characters so inimitably personated by her parent, in reference to which, we shall content ourselves by quoting Mr. Hazlitt, who, in his View of the English Stage, (one volume, 8vo. published in 1818), speaking of this lady's delineation of the character of *Rosalind*, observes as follows, at p. 168 :—

"October 22nd, 1815. A lady of the name of Alsop, a daughter of Mrs. Jordan (by a former husband), has appeared at Covent Garden theatre, in the character of *Rosalind*. Not only the circumstances of her relationship to that excellent actress, but the accounts in the papers raised our curiosity and expectations very high. We were unwillingly disappointed. The truth is, Mrs. Alsop is a very nice little woman, who acts her part very sensibly and cleverly, and with a certain degree of arch humour, but no more like her mother, 'than I to Hercules.' When we say

this, we mean no disparagement to this lady's talents, who is a real acquisition to the stage in correct and chaste acting,—but simply to prevent comparisons, which can only end in disappointment. Mrs. Alsop would make a better *Celia* than *Rosalind.*—Mrs. Jordan's excellencies were all natural to her; it was not as an actress, but as herself, that she charmed every one. Nature had formed her most prodigal humour, and when nature is in this humour to make a woman all that is delightful, she does it most effectually. Mrs. Jordan was the same in all her characters, and inimitable in all of them, because there was no one else like her.

"Her face, her tears, her manners were irresistible. Her smile had the effect of sunshine, and her laugh did one good to hear it. Her voice was eloquence itself: it seemed as if her heart was always at her mouth. She was all gaiety, openness, and good nature. She rioted in her fine animal spirits, and gave more pleasure than any other actress, because she had the greatest spirit of enjoyment in herself. Her *Nell*———but we will not tantalise ourselves, or our readers. Mrs. Alsop has nothing luxurious about her, and Mrs. Jordan was nothing else. Her voice is clear and articulate, but not rich or flowing. In person she is small, and her face is not prepossessing. Her delivery of the speeches was correct and excellent, as far as it went, but without much richness, or power;—lively good sense is what she really possesses. She also sung the Cuckoo song very pleasingly."

On the 7th of February, 1804, Mr. Cherry, to whom we have previously alluded, produced his piece, entitled *The Soldier's Daughter*, in which Mrs. Jordan personated *Widow Cheerly*, with the most happy effect. This character was alike removed from that of the *Romp*, or the lady of high *ton*, resting its claim to favour in the sprightliness, and genuine goodness of heart. At the close of the piece, which commanded particular success, our actress spoke an epilogue, terminating with an appeal to the indulgence of her auditors towards the writer of the comedy, which entreaty, however, was by no means required, as the play continued a favourite during the entire season, in the course of which, however, Mr. Cumberland brought forward his *Sailor's Daughter*, a representation that was unattended by success.

Our heroine, for her benefit this year, made choice of the *Hypocrite*, with a new farce, from the pen of a Mr. Oulton, of Dublin, in which she personated an Irish servant. The dialogue was interspersed with flashes of considerable humour, but upon the whole, the attempt was not calculated to make a favourable impression,—and after the first performance, no repetition took place.

The Drury Lane company, in 1804-5, commenced operations on the 15th of September, Mrs. Jordan performing the part of *Widow Cheerly*, whose *entree* was greeted with reiterated applauses. During this season, she had frequently to repeat the same character, as well as those in which she was so well known to the public. No theatrical novelty, however, was produced, until the 20th of November, on which night our actress appeared in the popular farce of *Matrimony*, adapted to our theatre, from the French, by Mr. Kenny.

In order to show the favourable light in which Mrs. Jordan was regarded at this period, and the countenance she received from the most dignified personages in the realm, we beg leave to quote the following article, originally published in 1806. We further hope to stand excused for inserting the comments of Mr. Cobbett, the correctness of which cannot be denied, however they may, in some measure, militate against the heroine of our pages. This article was reprinted in the "Political Register," of Saturday, the 9th of June, 1832, the present year, when its insertion caused such a rapid sale, that the edition was soon exhausted, and in consequence, a premium was tendered at the office, for any of the numbers that might be presented there for disposal.

THE FITZJORDANS.

The following article, which will give rise to striking reflections, is taken from the "Register," of September 6th, 1806. Twenty-six years ago, then, and when these people were babies, I foresaw the consequences that might arise from their existence.

"What a base and foolish thing it is for any consolidated body of authority to say, or to act as if it said,—I will put my trust, not in mine own virtues, but in your patience;—I will indulge in effeminacy, in indolence, and corruption;—I will give way to all my perverse and vicious humours, because you cannot punish me without the hazard of ruining yourselves!"

BURKE'S WORKS, Vol. VII., p. 364.

"The large grants of public money, made by the *Whig* ministry, just at the close of the last session of parliament, were, by many persons, and by myself among others, regarded as being totally unnecessary, seeing that the allowances to the several branches were already so ample. Colonel Wood has the merit (a merit that will ere long, be distinguished) of having opposed these grants; and, though his opposition proved ineffectual for the time, it encourages us to hope, that when the House shall again be *full*, there will be some few members, at least, found to endeavour to

cause a revision of this measure, which, I will venture to say, has given a greater shock to men's feelings, than any one that has been adopted for many years. But at any rate since the money has been granted, it must be the wish of every good subject to see it judiciously expended;—to see it, agreeably to the declarations of ministers, employed in, and 'supporting the *dignity*' of the several persons on whom it has been bestowed; and under the influence of this wish, what must have been the public feeling at reading the following account, ostentatiously published in all the London newspapers, of the 23rd of April, 1806, under the title of:—

"DUKE OF CLARENCE'S BIRTHDAY."

[To be precise, however, I shall, previous to my inserting the account, just state, that I copy it from the *Courier* newspaper of the day here mentioned.]

"The Duke of Clarence's birthday was celebrated with much splendour in Bushy Park, on Thursday. The grand hall was entirely new fitted up with bronze pilasters, and various marble imitations;—the ceiling was correctly clouded, and the whole illuminated with some brilliant patent lamps, suspended from a beautiful eagle. The dining-room, in the right wing, was fitted up in a modern style, with new elegant lamps at the different entrances. The pleasure ground was disposed for the occasion, and the servants had new liveries. In the morning, the *Dukes of York's and Kent's Bands arrived in caravans;*—after dressing themselves, and dining, they went into the pleasure grounds, and played alternately some charming pieces. The Duke of Kent's played some of the choruses and movements from Haydn's Oratorio of the CREATION, arranged *by command of his Royal Highness*, for a band of wind instruments. About five o'clock the Prince of Wales, the Dukes of York, Kent, Sussex, and Cambridge, Colonel Paget, &c., arrived from reviewing THE GERMAN LEGION. After they had dressed for dinner, they walked in the pleasure grounds, accompanied by the Lord Chancellor, Earl and *Countess* of Athlone and *Daughter*, Lord Leicester, Baron Hotham and Lady, Baron Eden, the Attorney General, Colonels Paget and Mc.Millon, Serjeant Marshall, and a number of other persons. At seven o'clock, the second bell announced the dinner, when THE PRINCE took MRS. JORDAN *by the hand, led her into the dining-room, and seated her at the top of the table.* The Prince took his seat *at her right hand*, and the Duke of York *at her left;* the Duke of Cambridge sat next to the Prince, the Duke of Kent next to the Duke of York, and the Lord Chancellor next to his Royal Highness. The DUKE OF CLARENCE *sat at the foot of the table.*

"It is hardly necessary to state the table was sumptuously covered with every thing the season could afford. The bands played on the lawn, close to the dining-room window. The populace were permitted to enter the pleasure grounds, to behold the royal banquet, while the presence of Messrs. Townsend, Sayers, and Macmanu preserved the most correct decorum.

"The Duke's NUMEROUS FAMILY *were introduced*, and admired by the Prince, the Royal Dukes, and the whole company; an infant in arms, with a most beautiful white head of hair, was brought into the dining-room by the nursery maid. After dinner, the Prince gave 'the Duke of Clarence,' which was drunk with three times three; the Duke then gave 'the King,' which was drunk in a solemn manner. A discharge of cannon from the lawn followed. 'The Queen and Princesses,'—'The Duke of York and the Army!' His Royal Highness's band then struck up his *celebrated march!*

"Now, first observing that I do not mean to give this paragraph as a narrative of real facts, but merely as a publication that I have found in the newspaper above named, and as a statement which I wish to see contradicted by order of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, or some of his brothers; thus observing, and explicitly stating that my object is to remove the evil impression which such a publication must necessarily tend to produce upon the minds of a people, who, *by the express command of his Majesty*, have read to them from the pulpit, four times a day, a long exhortation against vice and immorality, and who have fresh in their minds the huge grants of money recently made for the declared purpose of enabling the several branches of the Royal Family 'to support the *dignity* of their station,' thus previously observing, I would beg leave, as a beginning of my comments upon the publication before me, to ask the writer of it *what march he means*, when he talks of the '*celebrated march* of the Duke of York?'—and I would further ask him, what necessity there was in a publication of this sort, to remind the people of England of the Duke of York's *marches?*—and why he could not have so far got the better of his too obvious disposition, as to suffer those '*celebrated*' marches to rest quiet, and unalluded to?

"The representing of the oratorio of the *Creation*, and arranged by the Duke of Kent too, applied to the purpose of ushering in the '*numerous family*' of the Duke of Clarence;—the thus representing the Duke of Kent as employed in an act whereby the procreation of a brood of illegitimate children is put in comparison with the great works of the Almighty, is in this writer, an act of the most indiscreet disloyalty, and of blasphemy the most daring.

"We all know that the Duke of Clarence is not married, and that therefore if he had children, those children must be bastards, and that the father must be guilty of a crime in the eye of the law, as well as of religion,—and that he would exhibit a striking example of that vice and immorality which his Royal father's proclamation, so regularly read to us by our pastors, commands us to shun and to abhor, and enjoins upon the magistrates to mark out and to punish whenever they shall find them existing among us.

"While we hear this command so often repeated to us, and know that from the form in which it is conveyed, it comes immediately from his Majesty's mind and conscience, can we possibly suppose that he would wink at acts in his own family, such as are described by this writer? And when to this consideration we add the many others that present themselves upon the subject, can we hesitate in declaring that to represent the Duke of Clarence as having a 'numerous family of children,' is foully to slander his Royal Highness, and that further to represent him as *ostentatiously* exhibiting this 'numerous family' in public, and in the immediate presence of all his Royal brothers, and of the Lord Chancellor of England and others of the nobles, is to accuse him of a gratuitous and wanton insult against the laws, manners, and morals of the country.

"This representation and accusation I must and I do, therefore, consider as *false*, and I am confirmed in my opinion when I hear the same writer assert that the Prince of Wales took *Mother Jordan by the hand*, and in the presence of *a Countess, a Countess's Daughter, and a Baroness,—seated her at the head of the table*, taking his place upon her right hand, his Royal brothers arranging themselves according to their rank, on both sides of the table, the *post of honour* being nearest Mother Jordan, who, the last time I saw her, cost me eighteen pence in her character of *Nell Jobson*. This part of the account proves the falsehood of the whole. But, though amongst persons who are at all acquainted with the character of the illustrious personages who are by this writer represented as having been actors in the scene, there can be no doubt that the whole of the representation is false, more especially when we take into view the pious and strenuously enforced precepts of their Royal father's proclamation; yet, amongst that part of his Majesty's subjects who know nothing of the manners of the great, except what they learn through the channel of the newspapers, doubts upon the subject may prevail, nay—such persons may *believe* the representation of the *Courier*, particularly as it had been given in *nearly the same words, too*, by all

the other newspapers; and therefore being fully convinced that the representation must produce in whatever degree it is believed, an impression extremely injurious to the character of the parties named: not less injurious to the manners and morals of the people; and eventually greatly dangerous to the stability of the throne, for this plain reason,—that the most virtuous part of the people, that part of them in whose minds truth and justice are predominant, that part of them on whom alone reliance could safely be placed, would infallibly be the most disgusted, and the most alienated, by the belief of such a representation. Being fully convinced of these important truths, I venture to beseech the royal parties whose names have been so unwarrantably brought before the public in the above cited publication, to cause a formal contradiction thereof to be publicly made. I venture to beseech them to reflect on the fatal consequences which have uniformly ensued, and especially in recent instances, from proceedings such as are here described in this publication, and to remember that to be blameless, as they doubtless are, is not enough, unless they are thought to be blameless.

"I venture to beseech them well to weigh the words of my motto, and to consider whether, though the above cited publication is a tissue of falsehoods, thus permitting it to remain uncontradicted may not expose them among the uninformed part of the people to the imputation of acting upon a principle such as that in my motto described.

"I venture to beseech them above all things to reflect on what must be the natural and inevitable effect produced in the minds of the people, if they were once to believe that any portion of the grants made out of taxes, in times like the present, was expended upon objects such as those described in this poisonous publication; and lastly, as I have, in proportion to my means and my capacity, done as much as any private individual ever did in support of the throne, and the reputation of the Royal Family, I hope it will not be thought presumptuous that I now make them a tender of my pages and my pen, for the purpose of making and promulgating that contradiction which every *truly* loyal subject is so desirous to see."

Notwithstanding the large profits derived by Mrs. Jordan from her inimitable talents, it has been shrewdly surmised they were not always appropriated to her own benefit, there is, however, nothing wonderful in this, as numerous instances might be recorded of the *uses* to which beings under the human shape, and

calling themselves *gentlemen*, have *converted their mistresses;* nay, we have been given to understand that in numerous instances, the salaries derived from professional avocations have not unfrequently been applied to the use of such protectors.

We have also heard that in some instances *an embargo* has been laid on public performances, unless the nightly salary was paid over prior to a lady's appearance on the boards;—of course nothing of such a nature bears reference to our story:—

> ————————Let the gall'd jade go wince,
> Our withers are nnwrung!

It may be very glorious to rank a potentate in this world, but it is a more honourable thing to deserve the name of gentleman, —for title, though veiling a multitude of sins, will not engraft honour in a polluted soil.

We live in an age of improvement, and sounding names can no longer curtain flagrant depravity; the march of intellect may be impeded, but never stopped,—it may halt, but cannot retrograde; *mind* has received the grand impetus; reason has been inspired by the magic wand of truth, and the drayman is now as well aware that potentates are but fragile clay, and subject to be degraded by every vice,—as the mighty Bacon, or the reasoning Locke.

Little digressions are pardonable in a writer, and the foregoing remarks are only intended as *trimmings* to the subject matter of our theme.

In the progress of the trial of the late unfortunate Queen Caroline, it was currently reported that a certain illustrious character insinuated in the committee, that an occurrence had taken place between two parties, which if true, would have branded the individuals alluded to with an incestuous intercourse, which to contemplate only in imagination, makes us shudder.

Whether there was any truth in the statement adverted to, we will not pretend to decide, but we can assert that so prevalent was it at the period in question, and so fully credited by one of the counsel for the accused, that Mr. Denman adverting to the subject, made use of the following energetic ejaculation which ran from one end of the kingdom to the other:—

"*Come forward, thou foul slanderer, and let me see thy face. If you refuse, you are not so respectable as the Italian witness who comes to face the court,—you are worse than the Italian assassin, —you are plunging a dagger unseen, and converting your stiletto to a sword of justice!*"

The editor of the Trial then proceeds to comment as follows:—

"I should have thought it impossible for any man with the heart of a man, and the honour of a peer, to present such a case. If it can be one of the Blood Royal, I would say he had done more to degrade himself, and forfeit his right to the crown, than my Royal mistress would have done, had every charge been proved against her."

See the "Trial of Queen Caroline," published by Wright, Fleet-street, 8vo, vol. 2, p. 437.

"Amongst the voters against the Queen are exquisite judges of morality, and excellent observers of the commandment,—"Thou shalt not commit adultery." The Dukes of York and Clarence! It is enough to vitiate the whole proceedings, that on such an occasion, two such men should dare to present themselves in the House of Lords.

"What, is the age so lost to decency, that avowed guilt can sit in judgment upon persecuted innocence?—We would the spectre of the unfortunate Jordan should push one of them from his stool; though we must confess we cannot expect anything could abash the other; when he could leave the funeral of his wife, to assume the seat of judgment, in the face of his convicted adulteries with Mrs. Clark. These things are so monstrous, that we can hardly persuade ourselves they occur in England. Are we not at Rome in the time of Nero?—Or to what other barbarous but licentious times, have we reverted?"

After an absence of two seasons, Mrs. Jordan was engaged for Drury-lane, by Mr. Wroughton, who then officiated as acting manager of the establishment, and on the 17th of September, 1808, she appeared in the character of *Peggy*, in the *Country Girl*, which was supported with all her accustomed archness.

On this occasion it may be requisite to remark that her absence had been much felt by the public; if any inference may be drawn from the reception she experienced, which was enthusiastic in the extreme.

Nothing of a novel character transpired at the theatre as regarded Mrs. Jordan, until the 5th of January, when Mr. S. J. Arnold, whose talents had been before exclusively confined to opera and farce, brought forward a comedy under the title of *Man and Wife*, which commanded much applause. In this piece, our heroine supported a leading character, and spoke the epilogue with an effect that proved highly advantageous to the author, whose piece was given out for a second representation, with universal satisfaction.

On the night of Friday, the 24th of February, 1809, Drury-lane theatre was consumed by fire, on which occasion our heroine was one of the greatest sufferers among the company, for as she generally resided at Bushy Park, the major part of her wardrobe, and decorations of every description, were left at the play-house. With this melancholy catastrophe, the retirement also of Mrs. Jordan from any further permanent theatrical engagement took place; however, according to custom, when it became requisite to show a charitable feeling, she was never found deficient, so on the present occasion was her philanthropy manifested.

Mr. Taylor, of the Opera House, having accorded permission for the use of that establishment during three nights, in order to assist those performers of humble rank who had been sufferers by the conflagration, our heroine on the 23rd of March, performed gratuitously in the *Country Girl.*

As we conceive an interesting anecdote, tending further to illustrate the inherent goodness of our heroine's heart, will not prove devoid of interest, we shall proceed to narrate it, vouching at the same time for the correctness of the statement.

Mrs. Jordan, as frequently before remarked, was gifted with a mind susceptible of every tender emotion that confers honour upon the female sex, and such sentiments never failed to be called into action on the appearance of misery or distress.

During one of the visits paid to Chester, her washerwoman, a poor widow burthened with three small children, was, by an inhuman creditor, cast into prison for a trifling debt of forty shillings originally, but which had been augmented in a short time by the rapacity of a lawyer, to eight pounds. No sooner had our heroine ascertained the circumstance, than she sent for the attorney, paid the full demand, and then with all the severity she was capable of displaying, accompanied by a look, the very reverse of her accustomed good-natured smile, observed:—"You lawyers are assuredly infernal spirits, allowed as sojourners on this earth, to make the unfortunate more miserable." The man of law did not think fit to hazard a reply, but making an obsequious bow, retired, well satisfied in having pocketed his expenses.

The same evening, the poor woman received her unexpected discharge, just at the period when our actress was indulging in an accustomed walk, with her waiting woman; when the widow, accompanied by her children, having ascertained the route she had taken, followed her steps and overtook Thalia just as a sudden shower of rain had obliged her to seek shelter under a porch, —at which moment the grateful widow dropping on her knees, with the utmost emotion exclaimed, "God for ever bless you, madam, you have saved me and my helpless infants from ruin."

The children seeing their mother in tears, joined their piteous cries to the affecting scene, which could not fail to awaken all the impulses of a sensitive mind to sympathy. The uniform hilarity of our heroine's temper was not easily subdued by scenes of sorrow;—yet although endeavouring to conceal it, the tears coursed down her cheeks, when stooping to kiss the little ones, she slipped a pound note into the parent's hand, and in her accustomed playful manner replied, "There, there—all is over; —go, my good woman, God bless you;—I charge you, say not another word."

The grateful widow would fain have replied, but her silence was insisted on, and she departed.

It so chanced that another individual had sought shelter under the same porch, who was witness to the whole of this interesting scene, and as soon as Mrs. Jordan had observed him, stepped forward and tendering his hand, with a deep sigh exclaimed:—

"Lady! forgive the freedom of a total stranger; but would to the Lord, all the world were like thee!"

The figure and costume of the last speaker pronounced his calling; his visage was pale, and a black suit, grown rather rusty, arrayed his thin tall figure. Our actress soon appreciated his character and calling, and good humouredly replied, retreating a few paces:—

"No, I will not shake hands with you."

"Why?"

"Because you are a methodist preacher, and when you have ascertained who I am, you will send me to the devil."

"The Lord forbid! I am, as you judge, a preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ, who tells us to clothe the naked, feed the hungry, and relieve the distressed; and do you think I can behold a sister fulfil the commands of my great master, without feeling that spiritual attachment which leads me to break through worldly customs, and offer you the hand of friendship and brotherly love."

"Well, well; you are a good old soul, I dare say—but—I—I don't like fanatics; and you'll not like me, when I tell you who I am."

"I hope I shall."

"Well then I'll tell you;—I am a player." [The preacher sighed.] "Yes, I am a player, and you must have heard of me; —Mrs. Jordan is my name."

After a short pause, he once more extended his hand, and with a complaisant countenance, he replied:—

"The Lord bless thee, whoever thou art;—his goodness is unlimited; He has bestowed upon thee a large portion of his spirit;

and as to thy calling, if thy soul upbraid thee not, the Lord forbid that I should."

A reconciliation having been thus effected, and the shower being ended, they issued from the sheltering porch together; the offer of the preacher's arm was accepted, and the comic muse, with the disciple of John Wesley, trudged arm-in-arm to the door of our heroine's residence, and at parting, the latter shook hands with her, exclaiming:—

"*Fare thee well, sister!* I know not what the principles of persons of thy calling may be,—thou art the first with whom I ever yet held converse; but if their practices of benevolence go hand-in-hand with thine, I hope and trust at the great judgment day the Almighty Father will say to each '*Thy sins are forgiven thee.*'"

Mrs. Jordan on one occasion when performing at the Margate theatre, with a new actor of Irish birth, the latter on proceeding to kiss her, such being a feature in the representation, she turned her head so as to present little more than her ear.

"Och, by Jasus, then," cried the Hibernian,—"I'll be d——d if I kiss you at all at all;—if you won't let me play my part as a man should, you may do it all yourself."

Upon which Paddy very deliberately walked off the stage, accompanied, as may be supposed, by a loud roar of laughter.

In reference to the subject of our theme, the following delineation by a modern writer, is particularly applicable.

"It was not by a cursory acquaintance she could be known; unreserved confidence alone could develope her qualities, and none of them escaped my observation. I have known her when in the busy bustling exercise of her profession,—I have known her when in the tranquil lap of ease, of luxury, and of magnificence,—I have seen her in a theatre, surrounded by a crowd of adulating dramatists,—I have seen her in a palace, surrounded by a numerous, interesting, and beloved offspring, I have seen her happy—I have seen her, alas, miserable; and I could not help participating in all her feelings.

"At the point of time when I first saw the lady, she could not be much more, I think, than sixteen years of age, and was making her debut as Miss Francis, at the Dublin theatre. It is worthy of observation that her early appearances in Dublin, were not in any of those characters (save one) wherein she afterwards so eminently excelled; but such as being more girlish, were better suited to her spirits and her age.

"I was then, of course, less competent than now to exercise the critical art, yet could not but observe that in those parts, she was *perfect* even on her first appearance; she had no art, in fact, to

study;—nature was her sole instructress. Youthful, joyous, animated, and droll, her laugh bubbled up from her heart, and her tears swelled out ingenuously from the deep spring of feeling. Her countenance was all expression, without being all beauty; her form, then light and elastic,—her flexible limbs,—the juvenile but indescribable grace of her every movement,—impressed themselves, as I perceived, indellibly upon all who attended even her earliest performances.

"Her expressive features and eloquent action, at all periods, harmonised blandly with each other—not by artifice, however skilful, but by intellectual *sympathy;* and when her figure was adapted to the part she assumed, she had only to speak the words of an author, to become the very person he delineated. Her voice was clear and distinct, modulating itself with natural and winning ease; and when exerted in song, its gentle flute-like melody formed the most captivating contrast to the convulsed and thundering bravura. She was, throughout, the untutored child of nature; she sang without effort, and generally without the accompaniment of instruments, and whoever heard her 'In the dead of the night,' and her 'Sweet bird,' either in public or private, if they had any soul, must have surrendered at discretion."

Those who knew Thalia only half as well as we did, could bear testimony to her worth, and echo forth her praises; never were manners more open and undisguised; beneficence characterised her look, honey flowed from her tongue, nor could we ever trace in her conduct an approximation to any of those little failings that are too prevalent in the female sex. We have observed her in the green-room, where an aspirant in her own walk of acting has sought for fame—exert her ineffable sweetness to inspire courage, and ensure success. If wayward fortune oppressed any of the theatric company, she was the first to advocate a subscription,—and profuse in forwarding the charitable intent, thereby exemplifying the grand chasm that existed between the liberality of her spirit, and that whereby the great Melpomene of the day was warmed.

We knew Thalia at York, when her means had become scanty, compared with what she had formerly enjoyed, at which period application was made by a theatric character, whose name, from motives of delicacy, we refrain from inserting;—when the letter sent in reply, containing a five pound note, ran as follows:—

"SIR,—I have received your *distressing* letter, for to a mind ill at ease, any *discordant theme* becomes *oppressive.* The *trifle* I remit, I beg you will accept *as such*, and not conceive it the tribute that would have been paid to your talents in happier days, by

Sir, Your obedt. Servt. &c.,—D. JORDAN."

At the commencement of the year 1809, our heroine presented herself at intervals before the public, and in such cases for the sole purpose of contributing as much as possible to ensure a handsome establishment for her daughters by Mr. Ford.; this retirement from theatrical duties, appears to have been the result of a wish manifested by her illustrious friend, that she should no longer continue a constant member of any dramatic corps.

Mrs. Jordan had now become corpulent, yet such was the extraordinary pre-eminence of *mind* over *matter*, that no sooner did she open her lips to utter the music of her voice, than her corpulency was forgotten; everything was absorbed in the brilliancy of her talents,—the mortal encumbrance was wholly obliterated; in short, intellectual refinement cancelled the remembrance of her altered person, which had then become nearly as broad as it was long.

We have now attained the most momentous epoch of our heroine's life, and to prove the candour we wish to adopt towards any other party concerned, we shall now give a series of documents from genuine autograph papers, adduced by Mr. Boaden in his life of this unfortunate lady, with a view to obliterate painful impressions entertained in another quarter, assuming, however, to ourselves the privilege of making those comments we deem requisite, after which we shall adduce such statements as we can avouch for facts, and then leave the reader to draw his own conclusions.

During this year our actress was sedulously occupied in making preparations for the marriage and establishment of her three daughters. Frances, the eldest, espoused Mr. Alsop, a gentleman holding a situation in the Ordnance Office, who resided at No. 11, Park-place, with whom Miss Dora and Miss Lucy Jordan lived until the ensuing year, when the former espoused Frederick Edward March, Esqr., a natural son of Lord Henry Fitzgerald, also a clerk in the Ordnance Office, and in 1810, the latter (Miss Lucy), became the wife of General, then Colonel Hawker, of the 14th Light Dragoons.

To those ladies our heroine devoted part of her fortune, as well as a portion of what she acquired by her theatrical talents, naturally conceiving that any progeny resulting from the elevated connection she had formed, would be amply provided for by the father.

The settlements intended for the daughters are clearly designated in the quotation from a letter given by Mr. Boaden, which runs as follows:—

"I am sure you will be pleased to hear that your young friend Lucy is about to be married, much to my satisfaction, to Colonel Hawker, of the 14th Dragoons; he is a most excellent man, and has a very good private property; she will make the best of wives, —a better girl never lived; it makes me quite happy, and I intend to give her the value of ten thousand pounds."

To this she is said to have added £200 a year, while she was enabled by her theatrical avocations to make such disbursements.

In reference to the above statement, we have to offer a string of observations which we conceive it would be rather difficult to reconcile with reason or common sense, without the intervention of some secret mode, not hitherto explained, in which thousands were disposed of; now to the point.—

When Mrs. Jordan was first connected with Mr. Ford, she was living in affluence, kept a carriage, and all the necessary auxilaries; in short, her income was estimated as amounting to two thousand pounds a year, being the interest of a capital of £40,000. Miss Frances Jordan, her eldest daughter, was then, of course, an infant, from which time to her marriage with Mr. Alsop, a lapse of twenty-five years took place, during which, as previously shown in the progress of our memoirs, Mrs. Jordan was indefatigable in pursuing her professional career, both in the metropolis and various parts of England.

Sir Jonah Barrington whom we shall have occasion to quote in the sequel, asserts that at the close of our actress's theatrical career, when age, corpulency, and other circumstances combined to diminish her former attractions, she nevertheless netted in one year, seven thousand pounds, a calculation we certainly conceive, over-rated. Without wishing, therefore, to make our estimate on such an exaggerated scale, suppose we average her gains at four thousand pounds per annum, which is certainly speaking within compass, when all the fascinations and novelty of the zenith of her powers be taken into consideration.—the result at the end of twenty-five years, would be a gross amount of one hundred thousand pounds, which added to her previous fortune, made a total of one hundred and forty thousand pounds.

During our heroine's long continuance with an illustrious individual, it is but natural to conjecture that house-rent, the expenditure of the table, &c., were not at her charge, consequently she had only to find her private wardrobe and theatrical dresses, which taken at the most extravagant rate could make a very trifling inroad upon an annual income of seven thousand pounds, the interest of the capital above mentioned.

However, we now find Mrs. Jordan anxious to make a provision for her three daughters, to effect which she settles upon each ten thousand pounds, being a reduction of thirty thousand pounds from the fortune she had acquired, when there still remained one hundred and ten thousand pounds,—a statement, I believe, not to be refuted by the ablest calculator existing. We shall, in the sequel, have occasion to speak of a bond executed in favour of a valued relative, together with acceptances given in blank to the same party, for which she was in dread of legal pursuit; but to what amount were those claims?—why *two thousand pounds*, which would have been a very trifling diminution from the £110,000, of which by right she ought to have been possessed; yet notwithstanding this, we find her compelled to sacrifice property of every description, and fly for refuge to the continent, for the comparative trifling amount of *two thousand pounds*.

> "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
> Then are dreamt of in our philosophy."

At the period when Mrs. Jordan's daughters were disposed of in marriage, it was currently reported that a quarrel had taken place between that lady and her illustrious protector, for which various causes were assigned; and at the same juncture another exposure took place in regard to an elevated personage and his notorious mistress, Mary Ann Clarke.

Had we any desire to interlard our pages with anecdotic matter relating to the last mentioned transaction, we might insert materials as multifarious and diversified as they would prove in opposition to correct morals and common decency. These were derived from an intimacy with Colonel Wardle, M.P., of so much celebrity at the time, by whom we were informed that the royal inamorato now deceased, used to relate to his mistress, all the secrets of an exalted progeny, not forgetting those of papa and mamma, the whole condensing a body of materials calculated to form a record of iniquities, crimes, and fooleries, that might afford an excellent scope for a modern Gay to found a new opera, under the title of *Royal Knaveries*.

Refinements in pleasure were never formed for the slaves of debauchery, who are neither possessed of delicacy or judgment, since being all corporeal, they are incapable of appreciating the refinements of real passion. O! divine love, how few there are enabled to estimate thy blessings and enjoy the rapture thou art calculated to afford; those possessing only the grosser passions—who regard the qualities of the heart as of no account, are unworthy to be ranked among thy votaries, or participate in thy blessings.

In reference to the alleged misunderstanding between our actress and her royal friend, we quote the following letter, as it refers to the subject; having only to observe, that whatsoever disagreement might have existed, we feel thoroughly convinced that the lady in question would have tacitly submitted to any suffering rather than allow the fact. With this comment, we leave the reader to form his own estimate of the assertions contained in the annexed document.

"Bushy House, Sunday.

"DEAR SIR,—I should be very ungrateful indeed if I could for a moment consider as an enemy, one from whom I have received very decided proofs of kindness and attention. I love candour and truth on all occasions, and the frankness with which you speak of my professional merit, stamps a value on your opinion of them, and which (*entre nous*) I really believe is quite as much as they deserve; but we do not feel inclined to quarrel with the world for thinking better of us then we deserve.

"I do not know how to thank you for the humanity with which you seem to enter into my feelings; they are, indeed, very *acute*, and did you know the three incomparable and truly amiable objects of my anxiety, you would not be inclined to withdraw your sympathy.

"With regard to the report of my quarrel with the Duke, every day of our past and present lives must give the lie to it. He is an example for half the fathers and husbands in the world, the best of masters and the most firm and generous of friends. I will, in a day or two, avail myself of your kind offer to contradict those odious and truly wicked reports. I am so ill that I can do nothing myself, but must wait for the assistance of a good and clever friend, who is at present out of the way, and who (if truth is not quite scared out of the world) will endeavour to do away the ill impression those reports were meant to make. In the meantime accept my thanks, and believe me,

Yours truly,

DORA JORDAN."

As the daily prints continued their attacks upon the conduct of the Royal personage alluded to, our actress was at length prompted to seek the advice referred to in the above communication; after which we find from the same authority, a second epistle, containing the result of the conference, and the ultimatum of the Duke's wishes as regarded the future proceedings of our heroine in her professional career.

"Bushy House, March 27th, 1809.

"Dear Sir,—When I last did myself the pleasure of writing to you, I mentioned that I waited for the assistance of a friend who was not just then in the way, to contradict the cruel and infamous reports that were then in circulation; but on my application to him, (perhaps he was right) he said that what had *been done* had every good effect that could possibly be expected or wished for; and that a *renewal* of the subject might do more harm than good.

"Of this I should like to have *your opinion*, when you have read the enclosed.—I need not add that you will set the author down for a very partial friend indeed. In obedience to the Duke's wishes I have withdrawn myself, for the present, or at least till there is a theatre royal for me to appear in. Mr. March, and Mr. Alsop, the two gentlemen to whom my daughters are married, will do themselves the pleasure of leaving their cards at your door, next week. I ever am, Sir,

Your obliged humble Servt.

Dora Jordan.

"I am to play to-morrow week at the Opera House, and as it is likely to be my *last night*, it would not be amiss to have it insinuated into the boxes."

Whether there existed any real ground for the reports circulated in regard to a quarrel between our heroine and her friend, we do not take upon ourselves to decide; it however appears evident that not only herself, but her family were also rendered subservient to the scurrility of the public press, as we find from an undated letter, written in 1809, the following statement relative to her three daughters.

Without date, written in 1809.

"Dear Sir,—Having frequently experienced your kindness in assisting to do away any unfair impression, your candour, believe me, cannot be better employed than in the defence of three as good and virtuous girls as ever existed.

"It would be painful to me, and unnecessary to you to mention the cruel and infamous reports for some time in circulation, and to the extent of which I was really a stranger till last week. To say it has made me sick at heart, is saying little.

I remain, Your obliged humble Servt.,

Dora Jordan."

In a postscript to the letter preceding the above, mention is made of Mrs. Jordan's having to perform at the Opera House, which she did gratuitously, for the benefit of the necessitated

members of the Drury Lane company, after which she quitted London to perform at Bath, being accompanied on that occasion, by one of her daughters. Our heroine, soon after her arrival, discovered that the tales, so industriously circulated in the metropolis respecting a separation from the Duke, had found their way to the gay circles of that celebrated resort of fashion, as in a communication to a friend, we find the ensuing curious statements respecting herself and the subject adverted to.

"Bath, Sunday, 22nd April, 1809.

"DEAR SIR,—I should be more insensible than my heart tells me I am, if I did not experience much gratification from your very kind and friendly letters;—*friendly* they must be, for though I am ever asking favours of you, I feel it impossible that I can ever return them.

"My professional success through life, has indeed been most *extraordinary*, and consequently attended with *great emoluments;* but from my first starting in life, at the early age of fourteen, I have always had a large family to support. My mother was a duty; but on *brothers* and *sisters* I have lavished more money than can be supposed; and more, I am sorry to say, than I can well justify to those who have a stronger and prior claim on my exertions.

"With regard to myself (as much depends upon our ideas of riches), I have certainly enough; but this is too selfish a consideration to weigh one moment against what I consider to be a duty. I am quite tired of the profession. I have lost those great excitements *vanity* and *emulation;* the first has been amply gratified, and the last I see no occasion for; but still without these, it is a mere money getting drudgery.

"The enthusiasm of the good people here, is really ridiculous, but it brings 'grist to the mill,' and I shall, notwithstanding the great drawback of unsettled weather, clear between this place and Bristol, from £800 to £900.

"Though I very seldom go out when from home, I was, tempted by my dear girl to go to a fashionable library, to read the papers, and not being known, was entertained by some ladies with a most *pathetic* description of the parting between me and the Duke!—My very dress was described, and the whole *conversation accurately repeated!*—unfortunately for the *party*, a lady came in who immediately addressed me by *name*, which threw them into the most ridiculous and (I conceive) embarrassing situation imaginable. In pity to them, I left the place immediately, and flatter myself I did not show any disgust or ill nature on the occasion.

"The last favour I asked of you, was not to gratify my own vanity, but my *best friends*;—who in spite of the world, are I can with truth assure you as much interested about me as they were seventeen years ago.

Believe me ever, your truly obliged,

DORA JORDAN.

"P.S.—I fear I have tired you with my scrawl."

Having terminated her engagement at Bath, which proved very lucrative, our actress next repaired to Dublin, and from that place shortly after her arrival, she penned the following letter, which is interesting, as it contains an expression of her maternal feelings in regard to one of her sons, then serving in the army on the Peninsula.

"Dublin, Sunday, June 18th, 1809.

"DEAR SIR,—I had left Bushy for this place, before the arrival of your letter. That you would enter into my feelings respecting my dear boy, I was convinced when I sent you the extract, and as you very rightly supposed, only meant for your perusal;—for however gratifying it might be to my feelings to see any testimonial of his good conduct before the world, I have reason to believe that *he* would be very angry with me if he thought I had made it public. I only mention this to show you that he is an unassuming modest boy;—so much so, that we never could get him to speak of the business at *Corunna*, where he was himself concerned, but the accounts of him from every other quarter, were indeed most gratifying.

"With regard to myself, I have not much to say: the audience are of course very kind, and my reception was most brilliant,—but *entre nous*, I do not think I shall make as much money as I expected. With every good wish, I remain,

Dear Sir, Your most obliged Humble Servant,

DORA JORDAN."

The visit of our heroine to Dublin proved in one point of view, most gratifying to her feelings, being particularly noticed by many of the leading personages of that city; but as regarded her professional avocations, she was not quite so fortunate, as the dramatic corps engaged by Mr. Jones, then manager of the theatre, proved the very refuse of the mimic tribe. Not only were they of vulgar habits, and addicted to liquor, but so neglectful of the duties of their profession as not even to attend to the business of the stage, so that after one or two attempts, our actress at length found herself under the painful necessity of refusing to play.

It is by no means improbable that the disgust manifested by Mrs. Jordan, tended to heap upon her the injuries she had to sustain from those unworthy members of her own profession, more particularly a performer named Corri, who pertinaciously continued his abuse against our actress, and all those who stood forward to befriend her.

Among the advocates of our heroine, was in particular Sir Jonah Barrington, who for reiterated attacks that appeared in the daily papers, commenced an action against the printer. Upon the trial, the counsel employed for the defendent delivered a speech by no means creditable to him as a man of feeling, or a gentleman, in reference to which, as well as the contrarieties she was subjected to while at Dublin,—Mrs. Jordan thus expresses herself :—

"To Sir Jonah Barrington.

"Bushy House, Wednesday.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Not having the least suspicion of the business in Dublin, it shocked and grieved me very much ;—not only on my own account, but I regret that I should have been the involuntary cause of anything painful to you, or to your amiable family. But of Mr. Jones I can think anything, and I beg you will do me the justice to believe that my feelings are not selfish. —Why indeed should I expect to escape their infamous calumnies? Truth, however, will force its way, and justice exterminate that nest of vipers. I wanted nothing from Mr. Crompton's generosity, but I had a claim on his justice—his honour.

"During the two representations of the *Inconstant*, I represented to him the state Mr. Dwyer was in, and implored him out of respect to the audience, if not in pity to my terrors, to change the play. As to the libel on Mr. Dwyer, charged to me by Mr. Gold, I never directly or indirectly, by words or by writing, demeaned myself by interfering in the most remote degree with so wretched a concern.

"I knew no Editor,—I read no newspapers while in Dublin. The charge is false and libellous on me,—published I presume, through Mr. Gold's assistance. Under that view of the case, he will feel himself rather unpleasantly circumstanced should I call upon him either to prove or disavow his assertions. To be introduced any way into such a business, shocks and grieves me ; he might have pleaded for his companions without calumniating me; —but for the present, I shall drop an irksome subject, which has already given me more than ordinary uneasiness.

Yours, &c.—DORA JORDAN."

It may be imagined to what an extent the scurrility and abuse levelled at Mrs. Jordan, was carried, when her quiescent spirit was at length so wrought upon, that she came to the determination of applying legally for redress, a proceeding that would in all probability have been put in force but for the timely and salutary advice of some confidential friend.

Shortly after the termination of this disagreeable business, the battle of Talavera was fought, when her son displayed his gallantry, on which subject the annexed document is sufficiently indicatory of the agitated state of her feelings.

"Bushy, Thursday, August 17, 1809.

"I am very vain, but still I have judgment enough not to be fond of doing that which I know I do very ill. Still I feel pleasure in writing to you who so kindly enter into all my feelings. You may easily guess what they were last Monday night, when I heard the account of the battle of Talavera. Five thousand killed !—the Duke at Brighton !—I went to bed, but not to sleep.

"The Duke set out at five o'clock on the Tuesday, to be the first to relieve me from my misery. I am mentally relieved; but it has torn my nerves to pieces. I have five boys, and must look forward to a life of constant anxiety and suspense. I am at present very ill—excuse this hasty scrawl, and believe me,

Your ever obliged.—DORA JORDAN."

The coolness on the part of our actress's protector which had been so long talked of, seemed at length confirmed by her removal from Bushy Park, when she took up her abode at Hammersmith, not far from the late villa of the deceased Margravine of Anspach, which also became the partial residence of her illustrious friend. The sensitive feelings of our heroine were ill attuned to witness this neglect with stoicism, and in order, therefore, to recruit her finances and separate herself from scenes that goaded her mind to agony, she undertook some professional excursions.

Notwithstanding our actress's removal to Hammersmith, as above mentioned, we nevertheless find that there were short intervals during which she was either at Bushy, or St. James's, as two or three subsequent correspondences tend to prove, of which we shall speedily have proofs to demonstrate.

At the above mentioned residence, it was currently reported that very unpleasant bickerings frequently occurred; that the children of our actress were estranged from her, and as *pecuniary resources failed*, a palpable coldness and total neglect became apparent in a certain quarter. We do not pretend to deny that a

want of money might be experienced by one individual, but we are by no means enabled to account for any such deficiency in another party.

From all the foregoing statements in this volume, containing every event on record relative to our actress, we cannot trace one feasible reason for her being reduced in circumstances; yet that she did begin to feel pecuniary embarrassment is a notorious fact, the solution of which some persons, perhaps, may shrewdly surmise, notwithstanding all varnish used to gloss over and mystify the fact.

Although we cannot, for a certainty, point out the precise period when the final interview took place between the heroine of our tale, and her *soidisant* friend, yet the effects produced upon our feelings will not easily be erased from our memory.

She happened to be on the point of sustaining a character at the Cheltenham Theatre, when a letter was received from the individual alluded to, appointing a meeting at Maidenhead, for the purpose of exchanging an eternal farewell. Thalia, at the time referred to, had actually terminated her engagement for a few nights, having only to continue one evening longer, in order to appear in the character of *Nell*, in *The Devil to Pay*, for the benefit of Mr. Watson, then manager of the Cheltenham company.

It was during the afternoon of the last mentioned day, that the fatal letter came to hand, notwithstanding which, with that generous kindness that uniformly characterised her conduct, she refused to withdraw her name from the play bills, though her mental agitation at the time was such, that on her arrival at the play-house, from having suffered continued hysterics, it might be said she was saturated from excess of grief.

The following circumstance, however, having occurred during the performance, we deem it necessary to record the incident.

In the scene with *Jobson*, the *Conjuror* having seen her, *Nell* laughs immoderately, upon which the former is made to exclaim:—

"Why, Nell, the conjuror has not only made you drunk, but he has made you laughing drunk!"

On this occasion, when the suffering creature attempted to laugh, she burst into a flood of tears, upon which the personifier of *Jobson*, with great presence of mind changed the text, saying:—

"Why, Nell, the conjuror has not only made thee drunk, he has made thee *crying* drunk!"

By which means the scene passed off with the accustomed eclat. At the conclusion of the performance, our actress more dead than

alive, was placed in a travelling chariot, without having time to throw off her dress as *Nell*, and in that state set off to keep the final appointment with her former protector.

It may in this place be requisite to insert a list of Mrs. Jordan's progeny by this illustrious connection thus terminated, which runs as follows :—

George Fitzclarence, Viscount Fitzclarence, Baron Tewkesbury, Earl of Munster, in the Peerage of the United Kingdom ;—born on the 29th of January, 1794, married Mary, daughter of George, Earl of Egremont, the 18th of October, 1819, by whom he has issue :—

William George Viscount Fitzclarence ;—born the 19th of May, 1824.

Frederick Charles George ;—born the 1st of February, 1826.

Adelaide Georgina ;—born the 28th of October, 1820.

Augusta Margaret ;—born on the 31st of July, 1822.

Colonel Fitzclarence was raised to the peerage in the above dignities, by Letters Patent, dated May 1831, with special remainder, in default of his own male issue, to his lordship's brothers, Lords Frederick Adolphus and Augustus Fitzclarence, primogeniturely, and their male descendants. The Earl of Munster is a Colonel in the Army, Aide-de-camp to his Majesty, and Lieutenant of the Tower.

The Earl of Munster has the following surviving brothers and sisters :—

2. Frederick Fitzclarence, a Colonel in the Army, and Aide-de-camp to the King ;—he married Lady Augusta Boyle, daughter of George, Earl of Glasgow, and has one daughter.
3. Adolphus Fitzclarence, Captain in the Royal Navy, Commander of the Royal Sovereign Yacht.
4. Augustus Fitzclarence, in Holy Orders, Rector of Maple Durham, Oxfordshire.
5. Sophia Fitzclarence, married to Sir Philip Sidney, eldest son of Sir John Sidney, Bart., of Penshurst Place, Kent.
6. Mary Fitzclarence, wife of Lieutenant Colonel Fox, of the Grenadier Guards.
7. Elizabeth Fitzclarence, married to William George, Earl of Errol, hereditary Lord High Constable of Scotland, who has issue.
8. Augusta Fitzclarence, married to the Honourable John Kennedy Erskine, second son of the present Marquis of Ailsa (who died the 16th of March, 1832), by whom her ladyship has issue.
9. Amelia Fitzclarence, married 27th of December, 1830, to Lucius, Viscount Falkland, and has issue.

His Majesty, William the Fourth, was pleased on the 24th of May, 1831, to grant to all the above mentioned ladies and gentlemen, with the exception of the Countess of Errol, and Viscountess Falkland (who, through their marriages had already attained higher rank), *the title and precedency* of the younger issue of a Marquess.

The next document we have to offer, is a letter from the pen of Mrs. Jordan to a confidential friend, on the subject of the recent separation, which runs as follows:—

THE SEPARATION.

Bushy, Saturday.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I received yours and its inclosure safe this morning. My mind is beginning to feel somewhat reconciled to the *shock* and *surprise* it has lately received; for could *you* or the *world* believe that we never had, for twenty years, the *semblance* of a QUARREL. But this is so well known in our domestic circle, that the astonishment is the *greater!* MONEY, money, my good friend, or the *want* of it, has, I am convinced, made HIM at this moment, the most wretched of MEN; but having done *wrong*, he does not like to retract. But with all his excellent qualities, his domestic *virtues*, his love for his lovely children, what must he not at this moment *suffer?* His distresses should have been relieved *before;*—but this is *entre nous.*

"All his letters are full of the most unqualified praise of my conduct; and it is the most heartfelt blessing to know that to the best of my power, I have endeavoured to deserve it. I have received the greatest kindness and attention from the R****t, and every branch of the Royal Family, who, in the most *unreserved terms*, deplore this melancholy business. The whole correspondence is before the R****t, and I am proud to add that my *past* and *present conduct* has secured me a friend, who *declares* he never will forsake me.

"My forbearance, he says, is beyond what he could have imagined;—but what will not a woman do, who is firmly and sincerely attached? Had he left me to *starve*, I never would have uttered a word to his disadvantage. I enclose you two other letters, and in a day or two you shall *see more*, the rest being in the hands of R——t. And now, my dear friend, do not hear the Duke of C. unfairly abused. He has done *wrong*, and he is *suffering* for it; but as far as he has left it in his *own power*, he is doing everything KIND and NOBLE, even to the distressing HIM-

SELF.—I thank you sincerely for the friendly caution at the end of your letter, though I trust there will be no occasion for it; but it was kind and friendly, and as such I shall ever esteem it.

I remain, Dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

DORA JORDAN.

"These letters are for your eye alone."*

Let it be observed that notwithstanding the praise lavished upon the D——— of C———, which sprang from the writer's goodness of heart, she nevertheless cannot refrain at the close of her epistle, from allowing that he had done *wrong* and was *suffering* for it. The first assertion no one can deny; but in regard to the second, we can only judge of persons by their actions; and for our parts, we very much doubt whether an individual, having so conducted himself, could be susceptible of a compunctious yearning towards the being who was withering under the blight of his unkindness.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I should be sorry the letters I have enclosed to you were the only vouchers I could produce to the world, if necessary. But, good God! what will not the world say? I received two letters this day, telling me I was accused of *intriguing* with the Duke of Cumberland!

"I am heart sick and almost worn out with this cruel business, but I am, very gratefully yours,

DORA JORDAN."

Well, indeed, might the wretched lady exclaim, that *she was heart sick* at such a monstrous idea, as that referred to in the above note. It is true, *tastes may be* DEPRAVED, but there is one EXTEME in DEPRAVITY, which so rarely occurs, as to rank almost impossible; and of that description, would have been all intercourse between Mrs. Jordan and the being above adverted to. *De gustibus non est disputandum*, says the Latin adage, and certainly had such a *taste* been manifested by our actress, it would have ranked her; not on a level—but far more degraded than the lowest trull at Wapping; as there are certain associations, which even the most dissolute of the female race would shun enhorrored, and of such a nature is the supposition to which we allude. This preposterous and nauseating idea, brings to our recollection the disgraceful trial of the late unfortunate Queen Caroline, when the revolting charge was made of her having submitted to the embraces of her father-in-law, King George the Third, which

* The two letters enclosed by Mrs. Jordan, returned faithfully to herself, the condition attached to their communication.

abominable allegation produced the celebrated words of Mr. Denman, COME FORTH THOU SLANDERED! levelled at the exalted individual who had ventured to hint at such a crime.

From the ensuing letter, as well as the next but one, it seems that although the separation had taken place, Mrs. Jordan continued under the roof of her late protector, as these communications are dated from Bushy and St. James's; however, they are the last bearing such superscription; whence it may be inferred, that she was preparing to quit those royal residences for ever.

"Bushy, Thursday.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Allow me to thank you for your kind attention to my request. We really live so much in the country, and so entirely within ourselves, that we might be dead and buried, without our friends knowing even that we had been ill. I have the heartfelt happiness of informing you, that the Duke is considerably better, though far from being as we could wish; however, his physicians have given his Royal Highness permission to go to town to-morrow. I have been confined ever since my return, owing to the fatigues and anxiety I have gone through. I hear it will be some time before I recover the very great *shock* I received. I hear there are to be two Drury Lanes; I believe just as likely as one.

Yours, ever,—DORA JORDAN."

"Cadogan Place, Thursday.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I fear I must have appeared unmindful of your many kindnesses, in having been such a length of time without writing to you; but really, till very lately, my spirits have been so depressed, that I am sure you will understand my feelings, when I say, it cost me more pain to write to those interested about me, than to a common acquaintance. But the constant kindness and attention, I meet with from the Duke, in every respect, but personal intercourse, (and which depends as much on my feelings as his) has in a great measure restored me to my former health and spirits. Among many noble traits of goodness, he has lately added one more, that of exonerating me from my promise of not returning to my profession. This he has done, under the idea of its benefiting my health, and adding to my pleasures and comforts; and though it is very uncertain, whether I shall ever avail myself of this kindness, yet you, if you choose, are at liberty to make it known, whether publicly or privately.

Yours, ever,—DORA JORDAN.

"P.S.—I wish I could see you, but it is such a long way for you to come."

It appears from the above letter, that all *personal association* between the Duke and Mrs. Jordan, had terminated, while she eulogises his bounty in permitting her to resume her theatrical avocation, should she be desirous of so doing. Truly, a mighty condescension this, to permit a repudiated mistress, after *twenty years cohabitation*, to betake herself to a profession, after growing grey in the service, for the *purpose of contributing to her pleasures and comforts.* Pleasures forsooth! a mighty accession of delight she had to contemplate from toiling on the theatrical boards, of which she had long been sick; as to *comforts*, indeed, the labour was *seasonably recommended*, as the good things of this life can only be procured through the medium of money, whereof she was then disburthened; consequently, the profits accruing became a very requisite *desideratum.*

We are such rooted admirers of the divine Shakspeare, that we never fail to bear him in our remembrance; and therefore, as Polonius observes, speaking of Hamlet harping on his daughter. We must still continue to harp upon the old string, and enquire, what in the name of heaven had become of the hundred and ten thousand pounds?

"My dear Sir,—I lose not a moment in letting you know that the Duke of Clarence has concluded and settled on me and his children, the most liberal and generous provisions; and I trust everything will sink into oblivion.

Yours, ever,—Dora Jordan."

What was to sink into oblivion? The remembrance of an intercourse of *twenty years* standing? the having borne a numerous progeny? or the *hic presto* disappearance of a hundred and ten thousand pounds? These are events in a person's life not easily to be erased from the memory; and however forgiving the generous creature might be, we have a shrewd surmise that she did not forget!

At the period of the separation, an intended union between the Duke of Clarence and the late ill-fated Miss Tylney Long was publicly talked of, and report went so far as to state that the Prince Regent contemplated the bringing a bill into parliament, in order to sanction such union. In reference to this topic, Mr. Boaden observes:—"In fact twenty years *of sympathy and truth* leave always strong impressions upon the mind; and I have no doubt full justice has always been done to the *attachment* of Mrs. Jordan, by the royal personage to whom it was borne."

If this be not offering undeserved adulation, we never heard of flattery before; however, upon second thoughts, we conceive

that Mr. Boaden may not merit reprehension, as the daubing is so truly preposterous, as to verify the famous line of Pope :—

Praise undeserved is satire in disguise.

Mr. Boaden observes—"The letter from Mrs. Jordan upon the subject of the disagreement, mentions her *forbearance*, and that it was highly applauded by a great personage." We take it for granted, the then Prince Regent, "*nor is it unlikely that she might have placed some part of her fortune at the temporary disposition of her noble friend.* Everything of a *pecuniary* nature, however, it will be shown by adequate proof, was settled, with interest, up to the very hour of adjustment, and Mrs. Jordan's receipt in full taken by the gentleman commissioned to make the arrangement."

Here then we have something like an admission, that the poor lady had *forbearance*, and that *a portion of her fortune might have been placed at the disposal of her protector.* We now wish to enquire *the motive of this forbearance*, that gave such delight to an exalted personage. Was it her concealment of the nature of those pecuniary transactions; their amount; non-restitution, or failure in the payment of the annual allowance of a thousand pounds which had been secured by a bond? FORBEARANCE! a great personage to applaud the lenity of an actress towards no less an individual than his own brother; it must indoed have been a circumstance of no very trifling nature, that could wring such plaudit on a vagabond actress, from one of the haughtiest men in existence!

Although we have on former occasions commented on the large sums realised by our actress during her professional career; we cannot refrain from recurring to the theme. We once more beg leave to advert to the ample settlement of £1000 a year, and a sum bequeathed her by a deceased relative of her mother's; making with her professional gains, an annual rental of no less than £8000, including the £1000 annuity. Now suppose we deduct the latter amount *as never having been paid*, £7000 per annum still remained, being the interest of a capital of £140,000. We next find it stated that our heroine settled £30,000 on her three daughters, and ultimately, that she was necessitated to abandon England on account of numerous demands on a bond and bills she had accepted; now if such be the fact, she had not liquidated them; then how were the £110,000 that remained disposed of? The advocates for certain illustrious and fashionable individuals, may turn round upon us with brazen impudence (for assurance dwells with the great) and say,—"Ah! but the bills and bond concerns were only in part cancelled." What? £110,000

a mere wiping off of those incumbrances ; paltry evasion—wicked subterfuge! Then we again demand, What became of the capital? Our actress was no gambler, her habits were uniformly frugal, and for a series of years her house rent ; expenditure for the table, &c., had or ought to have been defrayed by another ; the advocates of greatness will never solve this problem—not so the abbettors of truth ; they see through the flimsy veil : sponges will suck up, and sinks engulph the largest torrents.

Now the pecuniary embarrassments under which our heroine suffered, did certainly result from a bond and bill involvements, the amount of which is stated at £2000, a sum she could not liquidate, although it seems more than probable, her claims upon others were of such magnitude, and this was coupled with other circumstances, that completely annihilated her peace, and compelled her to abandon her native land.

In regard to the thousand pound settlement, such things have been heard of as procuring the loan of a bond under specious pretences, and never returning the same. Transactions of this nature will sometimes occur in families, as a lady of the name of Robinson could testify was she still in existence.

We now come to the authentic statement respecting the unfortunate business transactions in which our heroine became involved for the sole purpose of relieving an esteemed, though worthless friend.

"Authentic Statement.

"In the autumn of 1813, Mrs. Jordan was called upon very unexpectedly, to redeem some securities given by her, for money raised to assist a near relative. The cause of this aid was the pressure of matters, purely of a domestic nature. The call upon her was sudden and certainly unexpected ; and not finding herself in a situation to advance the £2000 claimed, she withdrew herself to France, deputing a friend in England, to make every necessary arrangement for paying all the creditors as soon as possible. At the time of Mrs. Jordan's quitting England, she was in the receipt of an annual income of upwards of £2000 paid with the greatest punctuality quarterly, without demur, drawback, or impediment, and so continued to the hour of her death. Up to April, 1816, Mrs. Jordan's drafts on Messrs. Coutts and Co. were duly paid ; never for a moment could she have felt the griping hand of poverty.

"I can positively assert, that never during her LIFE TIME was one shilling paid towards *liquidating* the securities in question ; nor was it URGENT that it should be done : because the creditors, for the most part personal friends, well knew the upright principles they had to depend upon ; nor were they ignorant, that the

transcendant talents of this GIFTED being were always sure to receive a munificent reward from the hands of the public, whenever she should again seek their assistance; and in the fruits of this, THEY were sure of participating. Her protracted stay abroad was occasioned by untoward circumstances, over which the PRINCIPALS had no control.

"Up to the hour of Mrs. Jordan's leaving England, she had been living under the same roof, with the relative with whom she was concerned in the securities alluded to. Reciprocal acts of kindness, mutual confidence, in all domestic matters, and many points of private affairs tended to create in Mrs. Jordan's mind a reliance upon this person. Never for a moment during the six years that her daughter had been married, had Mrs. Jordan reason to doubt his sincere affection or his veracity; nor did she doubt them when she left England.

"Immediately upon the derangement of Mrs. Jordan's affairs, and *before* she left England, a STATEMENT OF ALL the CLAIMS to which she was *liable*, was made out together with a LIST of THE PERSONS holding her bonds and bills of acceptance; the result of which *convinced* Mrs. Jordan that her liabilities did not much exceed £2000, and that the claimants were *one* and *all* the personal friends of the parties.

"In August, 1815, Mrs. Jordan left England for France, with the intention of remaining away some ten days, the time computed necessary to place matters in that state, as to render her person legally secure from *arrest*. Her affairs were placed in the hands of persons well informed in every particular thereof, as of all other matters connected with her life. Mrs. Jordan was well aware that the creditors were only anxious to have their claims placed in a secure state, and that they were willing to give every accommodation required. She was also aware that her FELLOW SUFFERER had given up a considerable portion of his *income;* and she felt that her *representative* in England could in one hour's time settle any doubtful point that might arise during the arrangement. In short, she knew that no *impediment* existed. Consequently, when she found that month after month elapsed, without anything being finally settled, her mind became troubled.

"Mrs. Jordan left England; she took with her as a companion, a lady who had for some years previously been employed in superintending the education of Mrs. Jordan's younger children, and who had for the last twelve months, been Mrs. Jordan's constant attendant. This person came to England in January 1816, to receive and take Mrs. Jordan her quarter's income, then in Messrs. Coutts' house. From the moment of her arrival in Eng-

land, until she quitted it, she pursued a line of conduct towards the daughters of Mrs. Jordan, (then residing in Mrs. Jordan's house) that was offensive beyond measure ; she peremptorily and in a most insulting manner, called upon the person concerned with Mrs. Jordan in the affairs of the bills and bonds, to make oath that Mrs. Jordan was not liable to any claims *beyond* those of which she already knew. The demand was accompanied by base insinuations. Justly doubting this to be really the wish of Mrs. Jordan, and irritated at the circumstances at ending the demand, it was *refused ;* and on the same day this lady returned to France, and there is little doubt, but then for the first time, Mrs. Jordan did become apprehensive."

During her stay in England, the lady alluded to informed two of Mrs. Jordan's daughters, that Mrs. Jordan's future place of residence in France, was to be kept a profound secret from them, and that all letters from them to their mother, must be sent through a third person, and be directed to Mrs. James, instead of Mrs. Jordan ; thus, from that time, all such communications first passed through the hands of a person who might withdraw Mrs. Jordan's confidence and affection, from those most interested in getting her back to England. It is necessary to revert to the *verbal refusal* given to take the OATH demanded, because it has been made a point of much importance as connected with Mrs. Jordan's state of feeling in consequence of the publication made in the *Morning Chronicle* of 26th January 1824, of a letter of Mrs. Jordan's, bearing date 16th January 1816.

Mrs. Jordan's letter must have been written immediately after the return of the above-mentioned lady to France, and there is great reason to think that then *only* for the first time, did a feeling of apprehension of furthur demands awake in Mrs. Jordan's mind, and the fatal step of cutting off the source of communications prevented altogether, or perhaps only delayed the receipt of a letter written by the person refusing to take the oath on the very *same day ;* to say that he was truly willing to do whatever Mrs. Jordan should HERSELF *require*, and that the oath should be taken whenever she wrote to say it was *her wish*.

There can be no question that the mind of this great woman had been long and grievously oppressed. Nor will this be any matter of wonder when a retrospect is taken of her eventful life. Who can deny, that in the flow of her prosperity, she had many bitter memorials that GOOD and ILL will mingle in every human condition. The greatest pleasure that acquiring could bestow upon Mrs. Jordan, was its affording her the power of shedding greater happiness around her. Can there be a severer censure

on her memory than to think that PECUNIARY DIFFICULTIES, even *weighty*, (which her's never were) could for any length of time have depressed a mind such as her's in its perfect state?

I have thrown this statement together, in the hope that you will deem it satisfactory,

And remain, my dear Sir,

Most sincerely your's,

This document we take it for granted, is given as a most satisfactory and conclusive elucidation of all that may be required by the reader on the subject of Mrs. Jordan's pecuniary embarrassments. Now, so far from conceding to such opinion, we regard this *authentic statement* as one of the most unsatisfactory and inconclusive papers we ever perused. The unfortunate lady it seems was very unexpectedly called upon to pay two thousand pounds, and not having assets so to do, she, in order to secure her personal safety, fled to France. At the period alluded to, she was in the enjoyment of upwards of £2000 a year, yet no security could be given, nor any composition entered into with the claimants; finally, nothing short of expatriation could ensure her safety. So much for the first paragraph. We are next told that during the lady's life time, not *one shilling* was ever paid *in liquidation* of the bonds and bills, whereon the £2000 were claimed; and why? because the creditors were *personal friends* of the *debtor* who felt *so perfectly satisfied* with her honourable conduct, that nothing could be further from their minds, than having recourse to any unpleasant measures. Then why in the name of common sense, did she absent herself from England? and what is the meaning of the conclusive lines of the second paragraph, *that her protracted stay abroad was occasioned by untoward circumstances over which the* PRINCIPALS *had no control.* Who are the persons alluded to under the term PRINCIPALS? were they the creditors; her own family; or the individual with whom she had last cohabited? We confess there is something so enigmatical in this sentence, that we are not ashamed to own our inability to solve its meaning.

The following anecdote, never recorded, is one of the last occurrences that took place previous to Mrs. Jordan's bidding a final adieu to the land she had so prominently embellished—to the soil that gave her birth.

Mr. Charles Wigley, who possessed the spacious apartments formerly existing in Spring Gardens, and appropriated to the display of public exhibitions, was applied to by Mrs. Jordan, of whom he had some previous knowledge, in order that he might

become the purchaser of her furniture, &c. The above-mentioned gentleman who was well acquainted with Mr. Fisher, the auctioneer, father of the celebrated Clara Fisher, of histrionic fame—called upon the latter, and requested he would accompany him to estimate the household goods, pictures, &c., at a dwelling in Sloane-square, without intimating the name of the individual to whom the property belonged.

Mr. Fisher accordingly accompanied Mr. Wigley through the apartments, and as had been previously agreed, without proceeding to make an inventory, gave his estimate from the cursory glance, being from habit perfectly conversant with the value of furniture. Having completed the survey, they adjourned to a coffee house, when Mr. Fisher informed his friend that supposing an individual wanted the articles as they stood, the carpets, &c., being fitted to the rooms, they were well worth three hundred pounds; but if to be removed, he conceived one hundred less would be a fair estimate, though he might go as far as £220.

Mr. Fisher then accompanied Mr. Wigley back to Sloane-square, when the former gentleman, to his no small astonishment, was introduced to Mrs. Jordan, who he then found to be the proprietress of the articles he had been requested to appraise. After some conversation upon the subject, Mr. Fisher retired, leaving Mr. Wigley to close the bargain with our actress alone, which was done for the reduced sum of *one hundred guineas*, notwithstanding Mr. Fisher had stated that the property was worth £220—added to which, the lease of the premises was thrown into the bargain, which the last mentioned gentlemen assured the writer, was in his estimation worth £500, yielding to Mr. Wigley, the purchaser, a very snug profit, if he could reconcile the transaction to his conscience.

This melancholy fact tends to prove two things: first, the unsuspecting and easy mind of Mrs. Jordan, and lastly, her anxiety to conclude the sale without the least delay, in order that she might quit the country with all the expedition possible, so much had her feelings been wrought upon, and her apprehension of legal proceeding, excited in the event of a protracted continuance in London.

Our actress retired from her native soil with all the secrecy possible, when the first spot she selected for her residence, was a cottage at Marquetra, about a quarter of a mile from the town of Boulogne-sur-Mer. The habitation was small but neat, and the general appearance extremely cheerful. To this residence we find a single, solitary letter, forwarded by one of her ten children, which runs as follows:—

Colonel Fitzclarence to Mrs. Jordan.

[Copy.]

"MY DEAR MOTHER,—My dear Sophia* has been very low spirited since she received my ever dear Dora's letter; and she took the earliest opportunity to speak to Mrs. Arburthnot, who would speak to her husband about it. I am afraid we shall not come home for this long time. I long to see dear Lucy. The Arburthnots are very kind to me.—I have got a room in Paris. Hall is better behaved. I have had a horse shot. Tell all about the————'s If you want money for them, don't ask me for it, but take my allowance for them; because with a little care, I could live on my father's till *their* business. Now, do as I ask you, —mind you do, for they have always been so *kind* to us *all*;— and if I can make any return, I should be a devil if I did not; so take my next quarter,—and as you may want to give them some, do that for *my* sake.—I am very well.

God bless you!

(Signed) FRED. FITZCLARENCE.

"P. S.—Sophia will write to you on Thursday."

Addressed—'To Mrs. James, Post Office, Boulogne, France.'

At this residence, however, Mrs. Jordan did not long remain, for the mind ill at ease, becomes naturally restless, and that which affords delight one day, becomes irksome the next. From that tranquil residence, her care-worn mind was next directed to decide upon Versailles, whither she repaired to sojourn but for a transient period, when under the idea of living in greater seclusion, she made choice of St. Cloud, and adopting the name of James, there established herself.

Previously to her arrival at the latter place, she was rendered miserable by receiving no communications whatever from any of her children, or the last individual with whom she had cohabited for such a series of years,—though every member of her family had been repeatedly addressed in the most urgent manner. She therefore still continued to await letters, under a depression of spirits not to be described. Independent of her anxiety to acquire information respecting her offspring, the situation of her finances was much reduced; and on that account, advices from England were absolutely necessary to determine the future line of conduct she ought to pursue.

Day succeeded day, yet no letter came to hand, when the sentiment of indignation that pervaded her mind, was succeeded by

* His sister, no doubt attracted to Paris by the extraordinary events of 1815.

disgust at the base ingratitude and inhumanity displayed towards her, by the father of her offspring, on the one hand,—and the cruelty and undutifulness of her children on the other :—in short, the mask which had so long veiled the truth from her eyes, was withdrawn, and she perceived with horror that the fixed determination was to abandon her to her wayward destiny.

It appears obvious that Mrs. Jordan, who had naturally been imbued with no small portion of nervous irritability, even during her prosperous days, was not framed in the decline of life, when fortune frowned upon her, to rally her feelings and become as it were by supernatural agency, gifted with powers to stem the torrent of adversity. She entertained dreadful apprehensions as to her personal safety, and the thought of incarceration shook her mind to its centre. This terror, far from being repelled through the medium of any wholesome advice, was rather fomented by persons who under the specious pretence of friendship, used every effort to urge an abandonment of her native land. It was this manœuvre that prompted the almost instantaneous resolution previously detailed, of quitting Sloane-square, and sacrificing her property as she did upon that occasion. We have traced our heroine to her several residences in France, and we have now to record circumstances never before published to the world. In the days of her prosperity, and when basking in the sunshine of princely protection, the subject of our memoir had been in the habit of visiting with her infant offspring, the residence of a confectioner to his late Majesty George the Third, where she used to meet former acquaintances, whom she could not with propriety tolerate in the Stable-yard, St. James's. On such occasions the party to whom we refer used to gambol with the thriving progeny of the princely father, and, as may be supposed, the choicest of sweetmeats used to be spread to regale them; in short, during such visits (and we are not exactly certain that the Royal parent himself was not in some instances present) all reserve was laid aside, and our actress enjoyed that unrestrained intercourse which was so consonant with the unsophisticated effusions of her heart.

Thus far we have to state as regards the season of prosperity: we must now suffer the revolution of years and events previously developed in these pages, to transpire, when not only our actress experienced the sad reverse already pourtrayed, but the individual to whom we allude, from enjoying affluence acquired as a confectioner of George the Third, became in some degree reduced, and repaired to Paris; in which city, with the residue of his means, he established himself in his former business. Aware that his old munificent visitor was at St. Cloud, he proceeded thither,

under the hope of obtaining an interview, but to his no small astonishment found our heroine subjected to a positive state of *espionage*. A variety of questions were asked, and in reply to his anxious desire to be introduced to the unfortunate lady, evasive answers were given, so that he was ultimately compelled to relinquish the attempt, and thus retired without seeing the object of his enquiry.

Shortly after this occurrence, a letter came to his hands penned by Mrs. Jordan, entreating he would attend after midnight under a certain window designated, of the dwelling she inhabited at St. Cloud, when it may be naturally supposed he proved punctual to the appointment given. From the casement in question, he ascertained that our wretched actress was in a complete state of captivity; that *she was environed by spies*; and stood in need of the necessaries of life—being reduced to a state of great indigence. This interview continued for two hours, and such were the immediate wants of the poor supplicant, that she literally received the eighteen or twenty francs her visitant had about him, with a promise that he would return the following day; an appointment being made when she might communicate with him unmolested; he having further promised to provide himself with twenty pounds, the loan required at his hands, in order to make the necessary arrangements preparatory to her escape to England.

True to his word, he met the suffering creature, and gave into her hands twenty-four Napoleons, when it was agreed that in ten days after they should meet—the requisite plans being entered into—and that, under his protection, she would return to her native land. Strict to his promise, he attended at the time stipulated, when, to his infinite mortification and sorrow, he was given to understand she had expired the day preceding.

A few years elapsed, when circumstances not becoming more prosperous with our informant, he returned to England; and, pressed by the exigency to which he was reduced, made application in a certain quarter for repayment of the twenty pounds, advanced as above-mentioned; but the demand was resisted, under the plea that he possessed no receipt from the borrower—though letters were produced supplicating the loan in question—and thus the matter terminated; at least when we last saw the creditor (a year ago), who at the period in question produced a bundle of documents, which he stated his determination to make public, in consequence of the non-liquidation of the advance so philanthropically made upon his part. He farther added, that in the course of his application—being much changed in appearance and dress, and not being recognised by them—he nevertheless saw two or

three individuals enjoying posts in a great establishment who he recollected as having held the situations of spies, or keepers, over Mrs. Jordan. We may be asked the name of the individual of whom this information was acquired—*which we certainly could communicate*—but as twelve months have elapsed, and since that period he may have obtained the twenty pounds, we forbear to implicate him further. We know the last lodging in which he resided, where a sum for rental has been left unpaid, but we have not been able down to the present moment to trace him further, otherwise a more detailed account of this mysterious and black affair should have been given to the public, as we have very little idea that his applications were attended to subsequent to our final meeting.

To return to our wretched actress. Left to feed upon the anguish of her mind, she gradually became enfeebled in body, and a bilious attack was the result, which slowly increased, but its growth did not create uneasiness, so completely dejected and lost was the wretched lady to everything connected with herself, or that took place around her. Thus circumstanced life became so burthensome that she was led to contemplate the approach of dissolution with calmness, being resolved to welcome the final struggle with placidity.

The chambers occupied by our sufferer were in a hotel in the square adjoining the palace; the mansion was spacious, gloomy, cold, and inconvenient—similar to those habitations so frequently pictured in the romances of thirty years back. A long flagged corridor stretched from one extremity of the building to the other, the chambers were lofty and comfortless, and the *tout ensemble* demonstrated that the edifice had once been the habitation of a French nobleman. The apartments of the poor sufferer were most shabbily decorated; not one of those domestic comforts, so common in her native land, having saluted her regard during the last scene of existence! A small tarnished sofa was the most respectable article of furniture that adorned what might be termed the drawing-room, whereon she incessantly reclined, and upon which she yielded up her tortured spirit into the hands of her Maker.

We shall now proceed to delineate the closing scene of our unfortunate heroine, as described by the owner of the dwelling; and we venture to say a more affecting finale never stood recorded in the page of biography.

The individual in question, denominated as Mr. C——, conceived she was poor and tendered her the loan of money, which

was declined; notwithstanding this he uniformly regarded her apparent poverty and the wearing upon her finger a diamond ring an enigma not to be unravelled. The gem in question, from some secret motive, she never would relinquish—added to this, she is stated to have been possessed of some other valuable articles of jewellery.

From the moment of her arrival at St. Cloud, as previously observed, Mrs. Jordan manifested the most restless anxiety for intelligence from England. That feeling gradually increased, and became so intense that the skin actually became discoloured; she continued from morning till night sighing deeply, and in a dejected posture on the sofa. Several posts arrived, yet no tidings reached her, so that the intensity of her anguish became at length too oppressive for mortal strength to endure. When the morning of her death arrived, this torture of suspense had attained its acme; her agitation was dreadful; her regard, now restless, would then become rivetted to one spot; the motion of her limbs assumed a rapid and unmeaning movement, and her whole demeanour seemed to indicate that a convulsive paroxysm was on the point of taking possession of her frame. In this situation she eagerly requested Mr. C——, prior to the accustomed hour for the delivery of letters, to go to the post-office, and on his return, starting up, she stretched forth her hand, as if impatient to grasp the expected communication from England. She was informed no letters for her had arrived:—for a moment she continued motionless, regarding Mr. C—— with a wild and vacant stare; and again held forth her hand, as if by an involuntary motion not to be controlled; she then as quickly withdrew it, and fell back upon the sofa from which she had so recently arisen.

Alarmed, Mr. C—— hastily left the apartment to summon her attendant, who had, however, stepped out on an errand. He then returned, and, advancing to the sufferer, remarked an alteration in her countenance that appalled him. She uttered not a word—she breathed not, but gazed steadfastly upon him. She wept not—no tear bedewed her cheek, which was one instant flushed, and then assumed the livid hue of death. Deep drawn sighs were heard at intervals—it seemed the convulsive struggle of a heart on the point of bursting.

Mr. C—— continued irresolute, not knowing how to act. In a minute he heard the breath drawn with increased difficulty, accompanied, as it were, by an internal sobbing; at which moment the stupified observer became thoroughly terrified. He hastily advanced to the sofa, and stretching over the unfortunate

creature, found that the last deep drawn sob had been the immediate precursor of her untimely dissolution. She was a corpse! Alas! our actress breathed no more!

* * * * * *

Let the vivid pencil of Fancy conjure up this harrowing scene; let the form, once animated by the soul of hilarity, be pourtrayed to the mind's eye struggling in an agony of insupportable suspense; the bosom alternately heaving and motionless, and the overswollen heart's irregular palpitations proclaiming the unutterable anguish reigning within, and as it were beating heavy time to the quickly approaching march of death. We stand aghast as the final convulsive throb burst open the storehouse of life, and leaves the late crucified sufferer a breathless and inanimate corpse. Who, I repeat, can contemplate in imagination such an innocent and unoffending victim of cruelty and neglect without vending the groan of bitterness and draining the rivulet of the eye? who, in fine, can stifle the execration, "deep not loud," that springs from an indignant feeling, or refuse the prayer of pity that uniformly awaits the suffering of the gentle and the good?—if such there be, let them go herd with spirits great in name and heartless as those by whom she was abandoned.

"Illud amicitiæ sanctum ac venerabile nomen
Nunc tibi pro vili, sub pedibusq, jacet."

Ovid.

As an illustration of the manner in which Mrs. Jordan's death was announced in the public newspapers, we insert the following paragraghs, not one of which contains anything like a correct delineation of the events attending that unfortunate lady's untimely dissolution.

On the 1st of July, 1816, appeared as follows:—"It is but too true we hear that this excellent actress (Mrs. Jordan) is no more. She died on Monday last at Saint Cloud, in the vicinity of Paris. About nine months ago she went to France, but her health did not improve by the change—it gradually declined. In her letters to her friends in England, written early in the present year, she expresses in the strongest terms a presentiment that she should never see them more. The disease, however, which closed her eyes, and fixed in death those playful smiles which so long charmed the admiring world, was not connected with decline of spirits. She was seized with a violent inflammation in the chest, under which she suffered several days. The rupture of a blood-vessel in that region took place and closed the scene."

On the 2d of July, 1816, appeared the following paragraph in one of the London diurnal prints:—"Hopes are entertained that

Mrs. Jordan still lives. The letter which announced her death last week was received on Thursday. Letters of a subsequent date received in town yesterday, from a lady who accompanies Mrs. Jordan, states, that her life had been despaired of, but that severe blisters had been applied, and hopes were entertained of her recovery. None of her family have received any account of her death. The letter in which it was mentioned last week was received by a gentleman in town as law agent with the family."

"The Paris papers, received yesterday morning, mention the death of Mrs. Jordan. This charming actress lingered in a state of insensibility until Friday last, when she expired at two o'clock in the morning, at her apartment at St. Cloud. The former report of her death was therefore premature."

Oh, where were the yearnings of filial affection,—where the manly sympathy of the dutiful son,—where the tender commiseration of the sensitive daughter? At such a season even the *paternal command* should have been spurned with indignation, and the base thirst of lucre resulting from exalted patronage been rendered subservient to a mother's wants and anguish. Well, indeed, might Thalia have exclaimed in the emphatic language of the heart-broken Lear,—

> "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is,
> To have a thankless child."

Go, and adorn yourselves in the tinsel gew-gaws of fashion,—go, and indulge your pampered appetites at the ample board, and wallow on the couch of luxury,—we envy not your glittering guise, we covet not your splendid banquetings, or seek to share your down beds of voluptuousness; poverty with a light heart and approving conscience is to us more acceptable than splendour purchased at such a price.

We cannot refrain from remarking on this occasion, that any father ranks a despicable being who only controls the affections of his offspring in proportion to the necessity they experience of ensuring his support and patronage; a parent should be respected on account of his virtues, and rendered estimable in the eyes of his children by the goodness and rectitude of his heart.

It is impossible that we can stand acquitted of the obligations due to a mother, and it is one of the greater reproaches wherewith human nature is burthened, that in respect to tenderness the maternal instinct far surpasses that wherewith the child is imbued. Benefits received are less powerful incentives to gratitude and love than those accorded, and the care bestowed renders the child dearer to the mother than the parent to her offspring.

In reference to Sir Jonah Barrington's account of Mrs. Jordan's last moments, Mr. Boaden observes:—"Nothing is said of the attendant—how soon or how late she returned. Nothing is said of any resort to the FACULTY—as is common in such cases—that after trying the usual resources of their art in convulsive spasms, they might ultimately pronounce the actual extinction of life. Mr. C—— was satisfied that she was no more; and, after all, Mrs. Jordan, it seems, was really NOT DEAD. Towards the latter end of June a letter was received, written by Mrs. Jordan's companion to one of her daughters, informing her that 'after a few days illness the lady had died at St. Cloud!' At the same time the death was announced in some of the morning journals, Mr. Barton himself in his letter—shortly to follow in this work—says, that she died in the month of June. Her daughter was dreadfully shocked, as may be supposed, at the intelligence; at the time it arrived a month had not elapsed since her own *accouchement*. Three days after the first tidings, a second letter was received, from the same writer, saying, that '*she had been deceived by Mrs. Jordan's appearance;* that she was *alive*, but *very* ill.'

"Immediate preparations were now made for this daughter's going to her mother; but before they could be completed, a third letter came to hand announcing that 'Mrs. Jordan was really dead.' General Hawker himself then went to Paris to ascertain the fact, and I believe arrived there about three days *after* the interment had taken place."

Mr. Boaden then proceeds to detail the following very singular circumstances:—"Indeed, about the period in question there was a notion that, so far from her being dead, Mrs. Jordan had been met by various persons in London, and I MYSELF was very strongly impressed with a notion that I had *seen* her. The dear lady was not an every day sort of woman. Not that there were not persons who resembled her—for some such I knew, who had more than a *slight* resemblance in features, and who, to enhance their own attractions, copied her smile and a peculiar action of the mouth, which was full of effect, and pointed an ironical sentence. But there is physiognomy so minute, if we *will* observe, as to decide the almost indifferent actions of the human character. She was near sighted, and wore a glass attached to a gold chain about her neck. Her manner of using this to assist her sight was extremely peculiar. I was taking a very usual walk before dinner, and I stopped at a bookseller's window on the left side of Piccadilly to look at an embellishment to some new publication that struck my eye. On a sudden a lady stood by my side, who had

stopped with a similar impulse—to my conviction it was Mrs. Jordan. As she did not speak, but dropped a long white veil immediately over her face, I concluded that she did not wish to be recognised, and therefore, however I should have wished an explanation of what so surprised me, I yielded to her pleasure upon the occasion—grounded, I had no doubt, upon sufficient reasons.

"When I returned to my own home, at dinner time I mentioned the circumstance at table, and the way in which it struck me is still remembered in the family. I used on the occasion the strong language of Macbeth, 'If I stand *here*, I SAW her.' It was but very recently I heard, for the first time, that one of her daughters (Mrs. Alsop) had, to her entire conviction, met her mother in the Strand, after the report of her death: that the reality, or the fancy, threw her into fits at the time, and that, to her own death, she believed that she had not been deceived. With *her*, indeed, it was deemed a vision—a sepulchral appearance at noon-day—which I need not say was not my impression in the rencontre with myself. I have had, it is true, some *ghostly* intercourse, as a dramatic author; but Voltaire—no mean authority as a poet—has never rendered by his Semiramis a noon-day spectre either terrible or credible.

"Whatever becomes of the above, I cannot doubt that every care has been taken to ascertain the facts attendant upon her illness—her medical friend—her spasmodic suffering—her death and burial!"

The only memento left to point out the spot where moulder the ashes of our heroine, is a flat stone, a little raised, bearing the annexed inscription. It was erected at the expense of Henry Woodgate, Esq., of Dedham, Essex: who, accompanied by his lady, was with Mrs. Jordan a short period prior to her dissolution.

Memoriæ Sacrum
DOROTHÆ JORDAN,
Quæ per multos annos Londini
Jùque aliis Britanniæ urbibus
Scenam egregie ornavit,
Lepore Comico
Voces suavitate,
Puellarum Hilarium alteriusque sexus
Moribus Habitu Imitandis nulla secunda:
Ad Exercendam eamque
Dum feliciter versata est artem
Ut res egenorum adversas sublevarit
Nemo Promptior;
Evitu exiit 3d novas Julii, 1816,
Annos Nata 50:
MEMENTOTE, LUGATE!!

[*Thus Anglicised.*]

Sacred to the Memory of
DOROTHY JORDAN,
Who, for a series of years, in London
As well as other cities of Britain,
Pre-eminently adorned the Stage.
For Comic Wit,
Sweetness of Voice,
And imitating the Manners and Customs
Of Laughing Maidens,
As well as the opposite sex,
She ranked second to none
In the display of that Art,
Wherein she was so pre-eminently skilled,
Neither was anyone more prompt
In relieving the necessitous.
She departed this Life,
The 3d of July, 1816,
Aged Fifty.
Remember and weep for her!

We cannot dismiss the subject of the lamented lady's grave without expressing our astonishment that among the countless English visitants of Paris and its environs no independent gentleman of feeling should have been found to set on foot, and head a subscription for erecting a cenotaph, commemorative of the talents of the departed. Such a mausoleum would stand a signal record to eternize the shame of beings now existing; who by offering such a tribute would have tendered some atonement to the dead for the scandalous neglect they had displayed in regard to her sufferings and privations during the latter period of her existence.

In consequence of the anathemas thundered against stage-players by the members of the Catholic church the remains of Mrs. Jordan were in the first instance denied Christian burial, until, through the strenuous interference of an English gentleman of some weight, she was ultimately interred in the cemetery of St. Cloud, being followed to the grave by nine of her countrymen, when the funeral service was performed by the Rev. Mr. Foster, officiating clergyman of the British Embassy at Paris.

Thus terminated the mortal career of Britain's matchless representative of comedy,—the darling favourite of the public—the mistress of a prince—and the universally acknowledged best actress that perhaps ever figured on a London stage.

In order to prove how little credit ought to be placed on newspaper reports, we find that on the 8th of September, 1816, the following paragraph, which has anything but veracity to recommend it, appeared in one of the daily papers.

"The funeral of the late Mrs. Jordan was not conducted in the manner which has been described; it was attended by the Mayor of Saint Cloud, in his full dress robes, accompanied by upwards of two hundred of the most respectable of his parishioners. The Protestant service was read over her in the church, and afterwards a French minister pronounced an oration upon her—enumerating her talents, and many amiable qualities. She had, for a short time before her death, assumed the name of *Jones*."

Penny subscriptions having frequently been set on foot to pay what were deemed cruel and arbitrary fines, or to relieve individuals persecuted for their political creeds, we think a similar plan adopted, to raise a monument to the memory of our departed Thalia, would redound to the credit of society at large, and more particularly that portion of the community who are partial to theatrical amusements. Should such an idea be seconded by any of our readers, we should feel happy to forward their views by entering into a systematic plan to effect the design; for which purpose any written communications, addressed to the publisher of these Memoirs will be immediately attended to.

In order again to show how far the statements of newspaper informants may be relied upon, we extract the ensuing paragraph from a London newspaper, in reference to the individuals stated as constituting the *only Englishmen* who witnessed the ceremonial *en passant*, instead of having formed a portion of the actual assistants on that melancholy occasion.

"Mrs. Jordan was buried in the cemetery of Saint Cloud. She had resided in the village for some time with great privacy, under the name of Mrs. James. She was buried in a thin shell, stained black, but uncovered with cloth or ornament of any kind. Mr. John Greatorex, an hotel-keeper in Paris, and Mr. William Henshall, statuary, of Mortimer Street, Cavendish Square, were by accident passing and saw her interred. They were the only Englishmen present."

The following correct announcement first appeared in the English print published by Galignani, in Paris, entitled *The Messenger*, whence it was quoted by several English diurnals—the copy from which we derived our extract being under date of the 4th of July, 1819.

"We some days since inserted a letter on the subject of an unliquidated debt of sixty francs, due to the municipality of St. Cloud, for the space of ground appropriated as the last resting place of the late Mrs. Jordan. We feel called upon to state, that immediately after the publication of the above-mentioned letter,

we received repeated applications, both personally and in writing, from various British residents, all expressing an anxious desire to be permitted to take the debt upon themselves, both from a national feeling of what was due to the character of our country, and an individual sentiment of respect for the amiable deceased; and although, as we have authority to mention, the sum in question has been paid by a particularly active competitor in the honourable race of generosity, we nevertheless continue each day to receive letters of the same import, and to the same purpose, from the departments.

"To those who knew the fine domestic and benevolent qualities of this very eminent and gifted actress, whose very frailties were excused by almost every mitigating fact whereby female frailty can be excused, and still more, to those who were residents some years ago in the neighbourhood of Bushy Park, (our own case) the foregoing statement will afford a melancholy proof of worldly vicissitude, and of the peculiar fragile nature of the most natural links *in a certain atmosphere*. Speaking of Bushy Park, we recollect that in August, 1806, a grand dinner was given there, in honour of the Duke of Clarence's birthday, which dinner was attended by a brilliant assembly of *Royalty and Fashion of both sexes*, and of the first distinction, including even Dignitaries of the Law. At dinner, *Mrs. Jordan* took the head of the table, supported by the Dukes of York and Kent, while the Duke of Clarence officiated at the bottom. After dinner the *young family* was introduced, even to a white-headed infant in the nurse's arms. Drums, trumpets, healths, congratulations, and festivity were the order of the day. — See file of the Courier, 1806, 22, 23, 24, August.

"About the same time of the year, ten years after (1816) Mrs. Jordan dies at St. Cloud, near Paris, in a state of *poverty* and *obscurity*, and is buried in a *deal coffin painted black*, her funeral being conducted and attended by strangers; and now in 1819, we learn that an appeal to the public is necessary, to pay a part of the expense, sixty francs—*two pounds, twelve shillings, and six-pence*.

"That numbers of Englishmen should be eager to discharge that for the honour of their country, *which other people have so grossly neglected to the dishonour of themselves*, is not to be wondered at, particularly when in addition to the above facts, the peculiar generosity and benevolence of Mrs. Jordan's character are understood, as also that *she did not become poor by folly or extravagance*; and that lastly, if *unconnected*, she might have died mistress of a very respectable fortune. Taking all these

circumstances into consideration, the Paris advertisement forms one of the severest libels upon *many persons in high life*, to whom her talents were once rendered *convenient*, that ever was furnished. We believe the present Lieutenant-Colonel Fitzclarence and the Misses Fitzclarence formed a part of the young family mentioned in the above reminiscences from the Courier of 1806."

Were any further proofs necessary to render valid the assertions so repeatedly made in the progress of the foregoing pages, we certainly conceive the above pretty conclusive evidence. The commemoration of the Duke of Clarence's birthday, as reported by the Courier in 1806, we have previously given at full-length, with Mr. Cobbett's very caustic observations, and certainly such a striking instance of the strange vicissitudes of fortune is very uncommon, as that of the *Holiday Feast* and the BURIAL SOLEMNITY above recorded!

Gracious Heaven! the mediocre sum of two pounds, twelve shillings, and sixpence was not forthcoming to pay for the breaking of the burial ground of St. Cloud, without seeking it through the medium of charity;—let us hear no more respecting Mrs. Jordan's having died in easy circumstances, if not in affluence.

The above statement is conclusive, as regards the extreme indigence which attended her latest moments, and we blush when the recollection comes across us of those who were enabled, yet did not come forward to tender the aid required. What becomes of the laboured statements of Mr. Barton, the Ducal agent, which we shall ere long present to our readers; with all the trumped up tales concocted by the friends of the GREAT, to cast a veil over their ingratitude and uncharitableness. The whole vanishes like mist, and leaves the naked truth developed;—our actress expired as reduced in circumstances as blighted at the soul,—she closed her eyes heartbroken, neglected, and forgotten!

After the death of Mrs. Jordan, when most of the daily prints were pointedly acrimonious in their comments upon a certain exalted personage, while they commiserated the penury which had characterised the final stage of our heroine's career; reports were industriously circulated in another quarter, attributing all her necessities to the bond and bills signed for a valued friend, which had compelled her to abandon England under the dread of legal pursuit and ultimate imprisonment. As on previous occasions, we beg again to ask what had become of the *hundred and ten thousand pounds* she had accumulated, and why did the holders of such bond and bills await until the hour of poverty had arrived, to pounce upon their unfortunate victim; this bond and bill transaction had been of considerable standing, and while

Mrs. Jordan was in the enjoyment of every comfort this life could afford, then surely such would have been the season for bond and bill holders to commence operations. Is it reasonable to suppose they would let slip such a golden opportunity, and sleep during the season of affluence — only rousing to action when penury and affliction were the attendants on the object of their pursuit! The bare supposition is too ridiculous to require further comment. For what purpose then was this bill and bond affair brought in evidence, but to conceal facts that would have proved disgraceful to the living? It is our firm conviction that the timid mind of the heroine was thus wrought upon for the express purpose of urging her to quit the country, it having been pre-arranged she should never return. Has it not appeared in evidence none will dare dispute that her mind had been impressed with an idea that the absence would be for ten days or a fortnight at most, during which her pecuniary affairs would be finally adjusted, so as to admit of her coming back in safety; yet what was the result?—The communications from home were at the commencement of her absence very unfrequent, and after the lapse of a short period never attended to at all, which was productive of a state of unceasing anxiety that tended to hasten the final catastrophe. Let us enquire further, has it ever been proved that Mrs. Jordan was actually sued by the holders of the bond and bills?—in all we have read upon the subject, no such inference can be drawn, and it therefore appears to us that the whole was produced by a side-wind influence, for the sole purpose of expatriating this ill used lady. The worm when trampled on will turn, and there is little doubt but she was in possession of secrets worth knowing, and might have blown a mine calculated to set St. James's in an uproar.

The year subsequent to the death of Mrs. Jordan, on the 13th of the month of June appeared the following announcement, which, however, was not productive of the expected publication. Whether any such manuscript did exist we cannot undertake to say, though we conceive such to have been the case, and that the work was suppressed.

"Thirteenth of June, 1817, will be published in one Vol. octavo, with original letters, Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Jordan. This favourite retired to the continent, where she closed an existence insupportable to her feelings as a mother. By Colburn, Conduit Street, Bond Street."

On the subject of Mrs. Jordan's consummate talents in her profession, little need be said, as they were of such a description

as to outstrip all our attempts at praise. She unquestionably was not intended by nature to personate the woman of quality, for when put in competition with Miss Farren, her *Lady Teazle* wanted energy of manner, and her genteel comedy always savoured too much of the *Hoyden* to rank as a legitimate personification of high life. In the cast of sentimental comedy she was very effective, and for this reason, because not being required to bend, she never forfeited her dignity. In the *Rosalind* of "*As You Like It*," she was beyond all panegyric; her *Romp*, *Nelly*, *Little Pickle*, and *Miss Biddy*, so far surpassed the efforts of any other performer, that they might be pronounced unequalled without any fear of a dissentient voice. In the walk of tragedy, though not so naturally pathetic as Fanny Kelly, she was far more correct, and in accordance with nature, as she would appear in reality, and though not endowed with the violence of feeling assumed by Miss Kelly, her delivery was more true. As to our actress's smile and laugh, they were bewitching,—nothing in nature could be so enlivening; in short they were as much beyond the pale of description, as above all praise. Her laugh in particular gradually increased, and as imperceptibly diminished, so that the faintest sigh of its existence was as natural, and pregnant with effect as when it had attained the loudest swell;—this was as naturally resorted to by our heroine, as the best tutored and most mellifluent singer has recourse to a shake or cadence, and she was capable of managing all its modulations with equal skill.

Mrs. Jordan was of the middle stature, her face oval, not strictly handsome, but possessing great fascination, while her figure always inclining to the *en bon point*, for some years previous to her death had assumed a corpulency which did not assimilate with her theatrical avocations.

One of the earliest miniatures of our actress was delineated by Mr. Barber (now Barber Beaumont, Esqr.), while he followed the profession of a miniature painter in Southampton Street. It was done expressly for a theatrical publication of great elegance and popularity in its day, entitled *The Monthly Mirror*, conducted by a gentleman well known in the fashionable world, who is as young and as gay as at the period alluded to—in fine, a complete evergreen.

In the *Theatrical Examiner* of the 7th of Jany., 1815, under the head "Sketches of the Performers," No. 187, we find as follows:

"Of all the actresses whom we were in the habit of seeing before we came to prison,* and who still keep possession of the

* Written by Leigh Hunt, then in confinement for a political libel.

stage, the truest and most native is unquestionably Mrs. Jordan. Her talent lies in the expression of a warm, unsophisticated heart, full of kindly impulses, and quick as a child to everything new and pleasurable. Her range, in consequence, is not extensive. In sentimental comedy, she is particularly poor; and she is all deficient in the *Lady*, though as everybody must have their blindness of some kind, she does not appear conscious of it, and is sometimes injudiciously praised for the reverse by those who confound gentility with flirts of the fan, and a fine dashing manner. In fact, the principal secret of gentility is certain graceful orderliness—an habitual subjugation, more or less, of impulse to manner; and Mrs. Jordan is deficient in this respect, not because she is impudent or vulgar-minded, for apparently as well as by all account, she possesses those generous and affectionate qualities upon which the truest good breeding is founded:—but because from circumstances perhaps not to be found out, she seems never to be in the habit of controlling her impressions externally. We do not believe, with the world in general, that great powers of a different nature may not unite in the same person; but some, we believe, are less likely to do so than others, particularly if they depend on every day habits, and of these kinds is the talent possessed by Mrs. Jordan, and that which Miss Farren is said to have exhibited. If Mrs. Jordan were what she ought to be in the lady, we more than doubt whether she could be what she is in the boarding school girl, or the buxom woman.

"But then, how true to the life is she in characters of that description! In the girl, what hey-day veracity, what bounding eagerness, what tip-toe spirits and expectations, what exquisite ignorance of received habits!—In the woman, what generous confidence, what a flush of mirth and tenderness, what a breath suspended, and the blurting kind of pleasantry, relieved from coarseness by a delicious voice!

"There are some primitive expressions of feeling, to excel in which implies at once a taste for nature. Miss O'Neil, we are told, is pre-eminent in what is elegantly termed 'a cry,' and Mrs. Jordan always appeared to us unrivalled in a laugh. A stage laugh generally follows the speech which it should accompany, and is as good a set 'ha! ha! ha!' as the author has put down in his book;—but the laughter of Mrs. Jordan, in all its branches, from the giggle to the full burst, is social and genuine; it clips, as it were, and tickles the dialogue; it breaks in and about her words, like sparkles of bubbling water; and when the whole stream comes out, nothing can be fuller of heart and soul."

The last time we saw this charming actress, she was of a size, however convenient for the widow, certainly obstructed a little the dancing vivacity of the hoyden; but such is the effect of native feeling, vivacity, and a tone of generous temper that even in a portly young girl of forty hardly appeared an extravagance; and we had scarcely to shut our eyes in order to fancy ourselves in the middle of a school room when the governess had gone out of the way.

"Mrs. Jordan is not only the first living actress in comedy, but we fear that when our readers consider the matter nicely, she will be found to be the only actress since the retirement of Miss Pope, who can any way be reckoned great and original. There are some other clever actresses no doubt, but they fix upon one's mind no idea of themselves which we may not connect with that of another.—We shall therefore be very brief with the remainder."

The observations contained in the foregoing comment, are in general very correct, and conveyed in appropriate language; we cannot, however, coincide in opinion with all that the writer has thought fit to advance. There was not a character in which Mrs. Jordan appeared, that we did not witness frequently, and from critical observation beg to dissent from the foregoing decision as regards the representation of sentimental comedy by the lady under review. So far from observing any paucity in her personification of such characters, our actress on the contrary uniformly excited sentiments of the most lively sympathy; the tones of her voice on such occasions were plaintive beyond expression, accompanied by acting that evinced a perfect knowledge—from inherent feeling of what was requisite in personifying the supplicatory and the pathetic. In the beautiful melo-dramatic piece of "*Richard Cœur de Lion*," for instance, what could be a stronger appeal to the heart than her representation of the disguised *Matilda*, and in the scene where she discovers Lauretta's (represented by Mrs. Crouch) love for Florestin, the jailor of her own captured king and husband, there were blended in her speech and acting such mingled pity for her friend, with exultation at the discovery of her lord, that a finer struggle between the passions of friendship, gratitude, and fervent love could not be developed. In regard to the fine lady of Mrs. Jordan, we cannot advance thus much, though from the first time she appeared in *Lady Teazle*, which we witnessed, equally with other characters of the *haut ton*, we cannot find so much to reprehend as the writer of the foregoing article, whose comments, as previously observed, we in every other respect regard as strictly correct, and a most faithful personification of the comic powers of a lady who we never saw

equalled, and may confidently venture to assert will never be surpassed.

The last time she appeared before a London audience, her powers were evidently on the decline, and her corpulency had so much increased as to deteriorate greatly from the fascinations of her acting. With a very trifling compass of voice, she possessed the art of singing every species of air in a manner to command attention and ensure applause; and in many instances she executed very difficult compositions with success;—added to this, her ear was remarkably acute, and her recollection of an air retentive in the extreme. That our heroine was a most extraordinary genius and talented woman, cannot be denied, and that she possessed more natural attributes for the walk of life in which she figured, than any actress upon record, is a fact so universally allowed by the ablest judges, that we do no more than justice when we accord her the blooming wreath of Fame, and hail her as :—

"The unmatched Thalia of the British Stage."

In reference to our heroine having changed her name from Francis to that of Jordan, in order to elude the pursuit of the profligate Irish manager through whose infamous practices her first seduction was effected, we have learned the ensuing anecdote.

After her engagement with Mr. Tate Wilkinson, at Leeds, took place, having on one occasion described the misfortunes and dreadful treatment she had undergone in Ireland, the subject of our Memoir at length exclaimed :—

"*In short, I am certain that I shed tears enough to overflow the river* Jordan!"

When not having decided upon the designation she should assume, that of Jordan which had been so emphatically dwelt upon, was selected by a friend as the most appropriate apellation she could adopt, and was accordingly resorted to. Another version of this story is that after passing the Irish channel, she likened herself to the Children of Israel, who having traversed the Jordan, escaped from persecution and bondage, and on that account she assumed the name of the river in question.

During Mrs. Jordan's earliest engagement, with Mr. Wilkinson, at York, her personal attractions and histrionic talents so powerfully interested Mr. George Inchbald, then a member of the same theatrical company, that he made her honourable proposals. The gentleman alluded to was son-in-law to Mrs. Inchbald, and his assiduities were by no means displeasing to our heroine, but the visit of Gentleman Smith, the actor, to York, where he

became so struck with Mrs. Jordan's talents as to procure for her an engagement with the managers of Drury Lane, put a stop to this matrimonial speculation, as her immediate removal from the North to London proved the consequence.

It has been justly remarked by an anonymous writer, that when at York, "Mrs. Jordan uniformly distinguished herself by propriety in her domestic conduct, and the untaxed modesty of her manners; thus rendering herself the more amiable and distinguished by supporting and firmly protecting a breach which had been so lately assaulted and violated."

"Mrs. Jordan, therefore, in the view of a *fashionable Cyprian*, claims a fair and honourable distinction. Though always a *mistress*, still she has invariably acted up to the rigid principles and economy of the *wife*. She has never been lavish in her favours, but uniformly true and constant to the man she has lived with.

"To Mr. Ford she bore four children, one of whom died, and she ever comported herself as a constant wife, an affectionate mother, and a sincere friend; ever solicitous, and on the watch for their united comforts and happiness. This tender conduct so far and justly gained on the esteem and affection of Mr. Ford, that he promised to make her *his wife*."

"Mrs. Jordan," says the same writer, "has seven children living; at the period in question (1798) she has only three children by the Duke of Clarence. The eldest, who is a fine accomplished girl, about fourteen, is the offspring of Mr. Daly, the late Irish manager.—She passes by the name of Miss Jordan. She has three by Mr. Ford, who also pass by the same name, and three more, a boy and two girls by the Duke, who were christened by the name of *Fitzclarence*.* They are all under the care and education (together with Miss Jordan, a sister of our heroine's) of the Rev. M. Lloyd, at Ewell, chaplain to His Grace, who receives from Mrs. Jordan the yearly sum of £400 for their maintenance and instruction.

"And now to follow up the above little soliloquy.—As a mother, Mrs. Jordan will behold her children anxiously and attentively watching over her declining powers, blessing herself as she surveys their fondness and affection, that fortune and her prudence have rendered them thus cheerful, happy, and independent. The noble sentiments flowing from a liberal education, will teach them to reverence the mother, without sprinkling the tender

* *Fitz* signifies *Bastard*.—I do not see what absolute necessity there was of attaching this word to the children's names.

nomination with any unworthy reflections on the *father*. And the base ungenerous tongue that ignorantly reflects upon their own birth, that education will teach them to despise; whilst if necessary, it will also teach them to resent and chastise. The sense ingrafted in their youthful minds by the liberal and Christian principals of a *Lloyd*, will likewise teach them that one Being is the Great and Universal Parent of Mankind, and that Being will instruct them that next to him, they owe all their love and homage to a fond, a tender, and ever anxious mother."

So much for the generous comments and affectionate anticipations of an unknown writer, whose wishes were anything but realised by the lapse of years, as we have amply demonstrated in the progress of the foregoing pages. Had we not on previous occasions expressed our sentiments on this head, we would further dilate upon the topic of the ingratitude of children to their parents; we cannot, however, close the subject without alluding to the *titled* Fitzclarence, who not content with the honours and wealth already heaped upon him by his father, is said to have disagreed with him because further importunities on his part have not been complied with. Alas! poor Jordan, couldst thou rise from the grave, and behold the upstart pretensions of thy progeny, so diametrically opposed to those sentiments which it was thy constant practice to infuse into their minds, thou wouldst have a fresh pang inflicted on thy sensitive nature, and more bitterly lament the hour when fate decreed that thou shouldst rank the mother of such a race.

Anxious to render these memoirs of the utmost importance to the public, the editor having been credibly informed that a channel existed at Paris, through which some curious information might be gleaned respecting our heroine, the requisite steps were pursued. Through the medium of a gentleman, therefore, who had occasion to visit the French capital on business, the annexed statements were acquired, which we feel infinite pleasure in laying before the public, as containing many facts hitherto unpublished, and correcting erroneous statements that have hitherto passed current with the world.

Much misrepresentation and a variety of false reports having been disseminated through the medium of the diurnal press, as well as pretended memoirs, respecting the state of seclusion and retirement of Mrs. Dorothea Jordan from the land of her birth; of the causes which conduced to her adoption of that mode of proceeding, together with her premature decease, we think it requisite to annex the ensuing details, for the strict veracity of which we can conscientiously avouch.

NARRATIVE OF THE LAST DAYS,

DEATH, AND FUNERAL OF MRS. JORDAN.

BY A GENTLEMAN STILL LIVING IN PARIS; WHO ATTENDED THE FUNERAL, ETC., ETC.

"It is most probable that the real motive of our late actress's expatriation was confined to herself and some branches of her family, to whom might be added a confidential and most faithful attendant; one Miss Sketchley, who appears to have uniformly acted the most devoted part towards the lady who honoured her with unreserved confidence. The retired and humble mode of life pursued by Mrs. Jordan at Saint Cloud, under a fictitious name, contrasted with the affluence and splendour of her former station, most probably conduced to render valid the variety of reports afterwards disseminated respecting the treatment and neglect which she is stated to have experienced from a certain very exalted personage. The inference thence deducted was to the effect that Mrs. Jordan was subjected to a state of the most abject poverty and destitution, resulting from a cruel, dishonourable, and cold blooded abandonment, on the part of her former munificent protector. These assertions, however, were not correct to the extent reported, but whether true or false, being based on no other authority than surmise; the positive fact is, that the unfortunate lady was no more in a state of absolute destitution or positive starvation than she was in the enjoyment of that affluence, luxury, and splendour which had been the attendants of her former years.

"Among the very limited number of individuals who were accustomed to visit Mrs. Jordan during the period of her exile, it has been ascertained that she in no one instance made the slightest communication respecting the source of her mental anguish, or ever uttered a syllable in the shape of complaint or reproach, that tended to attach blame in the remotest degree to the exalted personage above alluded to. We do not thence pretend to infer that no blame was attachable in that quarter, as it was evident to every person possessing a knowledge of the patient sufferer, that she was gifted with a temperament so truly refined, as rather to pine and waste in silence than breathe her wrongs and sufferings to the world. Be the source of her sorrows what it might, it was nevertheless evident that the depression of her

spirits as far surpassed the limits of what might have been the result of pecuniary distress, as relief of a pecuniary nature must have proved inadequate in affecting a removal of the dreadful weight under which her afflicted spirit succumbed and was ultimately bowed down. The real fact is, that the internal disease under which Mrs. Jordan laboured, was the canker-worm, that never abandoned its devoted victim until the fore-doomed prey had ceased to exist and was numbered with the dead.

"Whatever might have been the cause that determined the wretched lady to bury herself in obscurity, there can be little doubt but the incitement was of no very ordinary character; no trivial disappointments, or temporary chagrin could have tended to subdue the hilarity, the buoyant energies and playful vivacity of her superior and well regulated mind, or compelled her to renounce her name, her friends, and a country so dear to her, a land where she had been next to idolised;—no; there must have been some hidden, some *potent cause* that could have impelled her to have recourse to such an unlooked-for line of proceeding, and there can be little doubt her *family*, if they thought fit, could develope the grand mystery.

"Mrs. Jordan had been visibly upon the decline for a long period prior to her dissolution; the acuteness of her malady, however, was considerably alleviated by the unvarying assiduities and watchful attention of Miss Sketchley, who had been her companion for a long series of years, and to whom several peers and peeresses of the present day stand indebted for the peculiar interest she took in the superintendence of their comforts and happiness during the period of their juvenile days. At the time of Mrs. Jordan's retirement one Mr. John Greatorex kept a highly respectable hotel in the Rue Pelletier, Paris, who was in the habit of supplying many English families with wine, spirits, and other commodities—he was in the frequent practice of repairing to St. Cloud, being one among the few individuals who was aware that the supposed Mrs. James was no other than the once highly-favoured and celebrated Mrs. Jordan. She uniformly received Mr. Greatorex with all that amiability of manner and unaffected condescension that were universally allowed to be peculiarly her own; the last visit he paid having been only two days' previous to her decease. On the occasion alluded to she ordered refreshments to be brought, whereof he partook—observing at the time that she was labouring under bodily indisposition, though she certainly did not appear on the eve of dissolution. After the lapse of two days, on Mr. Greatorex again presenting himself to enquire after the state of Mrs. Jordan's health, he found she had ceased

to be an inhabitant of this world, and in conformity with the revolting custom pursued in France, though not in strict accordance with the law—that preparations for the funeral had already commenced.

"The arrival of Mr. Greatorex, at the period adverted to, proved opportune in the extreme, and of the greatest service to Miss Sketchley—who, in addition to the extreme affliction whereby she was overwhelmed, had to superintend the arrangements for the funeral, surrounded by strangers, and unassisted by any friend or *compatriot*, in whom she could place confidence. But for the arrival of Mr. Greatorex, therefore, there cannot be a doubt but the remains of Mrs. Jordan would have been conveyed to their final home unattended by any one of her countrymen; and, from the intolerant operation of superstitious prejudice and bigotry, would have been committed to the earth without the rites of Christian sepulture.*

"In this painful dilemma Mr. Greatorex hurried back to Paris, where his primary object was to obtain the assistance of a Protestant clergyman. Unfortunately, the Rev. Mr. Foster, resident Chaplain to the British Embassy, chanced either to be unwell, or unable to attend on this melancholy occasion, when after much enquiry, trouble, and research, he ultimately succeeded in finding the Rev. Mr. Marron, officiating pastor at the French Protestant Church of the Oratoire. Mr. Greatorex having fortunately obtained the assistance of the gentleman in question, they were joined by Mr. William Henshaw, Statuary, of Mortimer Street, Cavendish Square, London, Mr. Keith, and other English residents —who hastily collected for the occasion, to the number of eight—and repaired to St. Cloud, when the funeral took place; on which occasion the mayor of the town assisted, accoutred in his official costume.

"The funeral service was then performed by Mr. Marron, with every appropriate solemnity, and in the most impressive manner.

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* For the information of such persons as may not be conversant with the usages of our Gallic neighbours, it may be requisite to observe that the law of France on such occasions is, "that no one be interred until after the expiration of twenty-four hours from the period of dissolution," this being enacted to guard against the danger of premature interments; which owing to the aversion entertained by the French as regards *tristesse*, or anything of a melancholy description, not unfrequently occurs, owing to the departed being hurried off to the grave in such a brief space of time. It must, however, be remarked, that the burial of any person may, and ought to be resisted, notwithstanding the authoritative blusterings of the Commissaire de Police, until unequivocal signs of decomposition shall be manifest—thus proving that the principle of vitality has become extinct.

The ceremony attending Mrs. Jordan's interment, although plain, was in every respect decorous—the coffin being covered with light blue cloth, lined and embellished with white furniture. After the office had been performed, a cold collation, consisting of fruits and different wines, was prepared by order of Miss Sketchley, for the pastor and gentlemen who had officiated.

"Thus terminated the earthly career of the being, who having for such a series of years participated in the smiles and sunshine of Royalty, became an additional instance of that melancholy versatility of fortune so frequently experienced by those whose confidence has been placed in the insidious and faithless promises of Princes."

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